MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

2010 YEAR END TOP 10s

MRR #334
MARCH 2011

WASHINGTON DC SCENE REPORT
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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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See page 4 for pricing and other info.

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For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

TOP 10

MARIAM BASTANI

- NO STATIK-live / HIMEI-Kankin-EP
- NECROMONGO-Grabaciones Desde La...-EP
- LOW THREAT PROFILE-Product #2-LP
- FACE THE RAIL-Fractures-EP
- HERO DISHONEST-Dangerous-LP
- HARDA TIDER-LP / OTTAWA-LP
- SLANG-Life Made Me Hardcore-LP
- NEGATIVE APPROACH-Friend To No One-EP
- MILK MUSIC-Beyond Living-LP
- PORCODIO-EP / VACCUUM-EP

BRACE BELDEN

- THE ZEROS-Main Street Brat/Hand Grenade...-45
- YOUNG IDENTITIES-Positive Thinking-EP
- BODYSNATCHERS-Frantic-EP
- DIALS-Television Silence/She Said-45
- BRIMSTONE HOWL/HELL SHOVEL-split EP
- FUNGI GIRLS-Owsley Knows/Glare #2-45
- PANIC-13-LP
- COCK SPARRER-Essentials-box set
- CIRCLE X-Tender-LP
- SLUGFUCKERS-Three Feet Behind Glass...-LP

TIM BROOKS

- DIALS-Television Silence/She Said-45
- DEAD GHOSTS-LP
- GENTLEMAN JESSE AND HIS MEN-You've...-45
- MOB RULES-The Donor-LP
- VACCUUM-Horror's All Over-EP
- TOTSUGEKI SENSYA-Chain Of Tragedy-EP
- SLANG-Life Made Me Hardcore-LP
- LOW THREAT PROFILE-Product #2-LP
- WHITE WIRES-II-LP
- CROWD CONTROL-Terror Cycle-EP

ROBERT COLLINS

- SHORT FAST AND LOUD 10TH ANNIVERSARY FEST
- NEON PISS / ALARIC / ARTIC FLOWERS-live
- VACCINE / PUNCH-live
- BELLICOSE MINDS-live
- CRIATURAS-Arañas En El Corazon-EP
- FACE THE RAIL-Fractures-EP
- HERO DISHONEST-Dangerous-LP
- MEDIA BLITZ-EP / ORDER-45
- SLANG-Life Made Me Hardcore-LP
- TRUTHDEALER-LP / XBRAINIAX-CD

SEAN "DOUGIE" DOUGAN

- ESTROGEN HIGHS-Cycles-LP
- BRIMSTONE HOWL/HELL SHOVEL-split EP
- IDLE HANDS-Volatile Matters-EP
- THE GIRLS-Remote View/Lord Auch-45
- HEAVY TIMES-No Plans/Ice Age-45
- PANIC-13-LP
- ROCKET REDUCERS-LP
- CHEIFS-Holly-West Crisis-LP
- GENTLEMAN JESSE AND HIS MEN-You've...-45
- CIRCLE X-Tender-LP

LAYLA GIBBON

- HIMEI-Kankin-EP
- SLUGFUCKERS-Three Feet Behind Glass...-LP
- MILK MUSIC-Beyond Living-LP
- LOW THREAT PROFILE-Product #2-LP
- MERCHANDISE-(Strange Songs) In The Dark-LP
- LA LA VASQUEZ-Buoy-EP
- CIRCLE X-Tender-LP / KILSLUG-45
- BODYSNATCHERS-Frantic-EP
- NECROMONGO-EP / OTTAWA-LP
- RAPE REVENGE-Car Ride With Vivisection Intern-EP

DAN GOETZ

- UNDERDOG-LP / THE ZEROS-45
- XTRA VOMIT-side of split-EP
- FOREIGN OBJECTS-live
- MILK MUSIC-Beyond Living-LP
- PORCODIO-Nessun Posto Per Me-EP
- DEATH FIRST / NEON PISS-live
- VACCUUM-Horror's All Over-EP
- CIRCLE X-Tender-LP
- FACE THE RAIL-Fractures-EP
- RAPE REVENGE-Car Ride With Vivisection Intern-EP

BOB GOLDIE

- YOUNG IDENTITIES-Positive Thinking-EP
- DEAD UNCLES-EP / FACE THE RAIL-EP
- GENTLEMAN JESSE AND HIS MEN-You've...-45
- COME AND TAKE IT-Forget It?-EP
- CHEST PAIN-Noth Coast Wirad Violence-EP
- LOW THREAT PROFILE-Product #2-LP
- NO CLASS-Keine Klass-LP
- WHITE WIRES-II-LP
- MILK MUSIC-Beyond Living-LP
- UNDERDOG-2xLP / CHEIFS-LP

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only, or demo releases to the address on the previous page

KENNY KAOS

- FLYING OVER-No One Here Gets Out Alive-LP
- GENTLEMAN JESSE AND HIS MEN-You've...-45
- BOYS CLUB-Every Good Boy Does Fine-EP
- CHARLIE AND THE SKUNKS-Take An Ice...-EP
- THE ZEROS-Main Street Brat/Hand Grenade...-45
- THE SPINOFFS-Stayin' Alive-EP
- DIALS-Television Silence/She Said-45
- YOUNG IDENTITIES-Positive Thinking-EP
- THE GIRLS-45 / BRUTAL KNIGHTS-LP
- THE WHITE WIRES-II-LP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- DIALS-Television Silence/She Said-45
- HEARTBEEPS-My Bones Are Tattooed-LP
- TOXIC FUSE-Can't Beat My Love/Complete...-45
- THE HAPPY KIDS-Hey!-EP
- KILSLUG-On the Rise/Human Sacrifice-45
- TORTURED TONGUES-Let Me Down-EP
- BODYSNATCHERS-Frantic-EP
- YOUNG IDENTITIES-Positive Thinking-EP
- THE EVIL STREAKS-Go Go To Hell-EP
- PANIC-13-LP

RAY LUJAN

- BOYS CLUB-EP / COME WIND-CD
- CRUSADES-Dreamers-EP
- DEAD UNCLES-Flatlining-EP
- DIALS-Television Silence/She Said-45
- FLYING OVER-LP / FUNGI GIRLS-Owsley...-45
- GENTLEMAN JESSE AND HIS MEN-You've...-45
- THE GODS OF MACHO-Macho-LP
- MIRRORS AND WIRES-Mercitron-EP
- NOT ON TOUR-CD / TATTLE TALES-CD
- ZOMBIE SURF CAMP-Reefbiter-CD

MARISSA MAGIC – NEW TOP TEN!!!

- RAPE REVENGE-Car Ride With Vivisection Intern-EP
- MILK MUSIC-Beyond Living-LP
- CRIATURAS-Arañas En El Corazon-EP
- FIST CITY-Hunting You-LP
- CIRCLE X-Tender-LP
- SLUGFUCKERS-Three Feet Behind Glass...-LP
- LA LA VASQUEZ-Buoy-EP
- PRIMARY COLORS-tape
- AMERICAN SPLITS-live
- GONER/LUNGE-split EP

KEN SANDERSON

- DEATH DEALERS-Files Of Atrocity-CD
- LOW THREAT PROFILE-Product #2-LP
- HARDA TIDER-Gatan Kallar-LP
- HERO DISHONEST-LP / PORCODIO-EP
- REALITY CRISIS-Sound Of Destruction-EP
- ORDER-EP / BABLEDÖM-EP
- TROPIEZO/XTRA VOMIT-split EP
- VACCUUM-EP / DESPERATE HOURS-EP
- NECROMONGO-Grabaciones Desde La...-EP
- HIMEI-Kankin-EP

FRED SCHRUNK

- MILK MUSIC-Beyond Living-LP
- MERCHANDISE-(Strange Songs) In The Dark-LP
- HIMEI-Kankin-EP
- DARK RIDES-Opponent-EP
- CRIATURAS-Arañas En El Corazon-EP
- CLOSET FAIRIES-Popular Science/Painted In...-45
- ADD/C-Busy Days-LP
- SEVERANCE PACKAGE/STREET EATERS-split EP
- SLOANE PETERSON-Second Shances-EP
- SLUGFUCKERS-Three Feet Behind Glass...-LP

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

- HIMEI-Kankin-EP
- REALITY CRISIS-Sound Of Destruction-EP
- FACE THE RAIL-Fractures-EP
- OTTAWA-LP
- DESPERATE HOURS-The Ironies Of Life Continue-EP
- LOW THREAT PROFILE-Product #2-LP
- SLANG-Life Made Me Hardcore-LP
- HERO DISHONEST-Dangerous-LP
- MILK MUSIC-Beyond Living-LP
- NEGATIVE APPROACH-Friend To No One-EP

ZINE TOP TEN

- *Accept The Darkness #4*
- *Spit On The Major #20*
- *Artcore #27*
- *Radiation Sickness #5*
- *Negative Guestlist #17, #18*
- *Solidarity Unionism At Starbucks*
- *A Start At Least #2*
- *SIx Letters To You #1*
- *That's Cool, That's Trash! #2*
- *Proof I Exist #13 / Mongrel Zine #9*

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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit; Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ea, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waffle, Flat Earth Recs.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion.

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob.

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Blueblooods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, Artcore, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, Snakepit zine, Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, Trust zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Vakivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl, Vrah.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Voetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue, Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, Boss Martians, Reactionary 3, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September'05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05 Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthoven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records, Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, Baboon of Sickness zine, Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, Trust fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Pt 1, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (Avow zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Pt 2, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormerow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, We're Gonna Fight zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. MRR 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?, The Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#296/January '08. Hellshock, Mario Panciera, Anathema, The System, Eddy Current Suppression Ring, The Voids, Cinecyde, Kykloppien Sukupuutto, Punch In The Face, BSA.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia.

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#300/May '08. NorCal Punk Special: Fix My Head, Black Rainbow, Tank Crimes, Young Offenders, Church Police, Traditional Fools, Six Weeks/Short Fast & Loud, Ecoli.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/August '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photospread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/September '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305/October '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306/November '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

#308/January '09. Punks & Film Special with Target Video, Whatever Happened To Susan Jane, Cleveland's Screaming, Mondo Vision, After the Salad Days, You Weren't There, Botinada, Taqwacores, and more.

#309/February '09. Ooga Boogas,Mind Eraser, Cococoma, Extortion, Boyracer, Nixe, Mr. California, Deathcage, Squalora, Maniax, Null and Void, Think Fast.

#310/March '09. 2008 Year-end Top Tens. Health Issue Special–Interviews with Mikey Mind, Chris Colohan and Craig Lewis, plus tons of articles.

#311/April '09. Print Media special with Erick Lyle (Scam zine), Shit-Fi, Z-Gun, Terminal Boredom, Tales Of Blarg, John Holmstrom (Punk magazine), History of skate zines, Punk flyer art, and a dozen one-page fanzines.

#312/May '09. Criminal Damage, Never Healed, Masonics, Screaming Females, Germ Attak, Petticoats, Condominium, Passion Killers, Pioggia Nera, & the second part of the health issue.

#313/June '09. Cult Ritual, Acid Reflux, NN, Herds, Hunx and His Punx, Grass Widow, Project Hopeless, Defect Defect, Tom's Midnight Garden, Existers and scene reports from Sydney and Boston.

#314/July '09. Libyans, Coke Bust, Strange Boys, Turboslut, Vogue, Smart Cops, Zyanose, Dennis Dread, a History of Squatting in Italy, Tornonto Scene Report.

#315/August '09. Zero Boys, Skin Like Iron, Punch, The Black and Whites, Insomnio, Resist, Blank Dogs, Etacarinae, Come On, London and Brest scene reports.

#316/September '09. Amebix, Born/Dead, Divisions, Meatlocker, Something Fierce, Mutating Meltdown,Altercado, Anal Warnead, Nick Toczec, Cowley Club, Albany Scene Report.

#317/October '09. Queer issue with Nastyfacts, Gary Floyd, Limp Wrist, Jos Seein' Red, GB Jones, Younger Lovers, Vaginal Davis, Josh Ploeg, Teu Pai Já Sabe?, Schwarzer Kanal, Bromance, Extra Tongue, and more.

#318/November '09. Destino Final, Ratas Del Vaticano, Hex Dispensers, John Joseph/Cro-Mags, Explode Into Colors, Ratos De Porao, Stupids, Antidotum/Czosnek Tour Diary, Disco Assault, Fuera De Linea.

#319/December '09. The Fix, Slices, Nodzzz, Brilliant Colors, Positive Noise, Gun Outfit, Pink Reason, Scrotum Poles, Gandhi's Cookbook, Goner Fest Photospread, Punk On Kuollut, Elaköon Hardcore: A Personal History of Finnish Hardcore.

#320/January '10. MRR Top Ten of the Decade, D-Clone, Broken Water, Complications, Control, Ian Glasper (The Day the Country Died/Burning Britain).

#322/March '10. MRR Review Staff's 2009 Top Tens, Japanese artist Sugi, Death, Dry-Roy, Druid Perfume, Kim Phuc, Defensa Absoluta.

#323/April '10. The Spits, Face the Rail, Battletorn, Scatha, Dadfag, Attentat Sonore, Partibrejkers, Mob Rules, Last Pogo, John Paull Williams from Really Red, Chuck Warner.

#324/May '10. Bruce Roehrs memorial,, Kleenex/Liliput, Necro Hippies, Isterismo, RVIVR, Iceage, Tubers, Rot Shit, Beefeater, Cairo IL.

#325/June '10. X (Australia), Daylight Robbery, Ty Segall, Morne, Nu Sensae, Pollution, Th' Inbred, Bad Sports, Wankys, Rakosi, Lotus Fucker.

#326/July '10. U-ron from Really Red, Slang, Bunny Skulls, Trash Kit, Sedition, High Castle, Marcel Duchamp, Street Eaters, Circle Pit, Mehkago NT, Random Conflict, New Orleans and Calgary scene reports.

#327/August '10. Os Estudantes, The Curse, Pekinska Patka, Venereans, Thou, Italian Scene Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Culo.

#328/Mocktober '10. Deathrats, The Conversions, Agnostic Front, Puffy Areolas, Super Wild Horses, Rape Revenge, Bernays Propaganda, New York and Czech Republic Scene Reports.
Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Culo.

#329/Fall '10. Cock SParrer, UV Race, Veins, Kakka Hätä 77, Saint Vitus, Kontatto, De Høje Hæle, Moonhearts, Irritones, Beyond Pink, French Scene Report.

#330/November '10. Forgetters, Acephalix, Foreign Objects, Hank IV, Pheromoans, La La Vasquez, Credentials, Bukkake Boys, Negative Lifestyle, Tyranna, Katriina Etholen, Ireland Scene Report.

#331/December '10. Kylma Sota, Articles of Faith, Total Abuse, La Merma, Doña Maldad, Frankie Rose and the Outs, Little League, Versificator, Frankfurt Germany Scene Report, Belgium Scene Report.

#332/January '11. Punk Comics Issue! Shawn Kerri, Jaime Hernandez, Gary Panter, Mimi Pond, Ed Luce, Avi Spivak, Liz Suburbia, Eric Hone, Kaz, John Holmstrom, Bobby Madness, Dennis Worden, Cristy Road, Ben Snakepit, Ted May+Jeff Wilson, Janelle Hessig, Craig Bostick, Fly, Alex ratcharge, Caroline Paquita, Jaime Crespo, Josh Bayer, Ben Lyon, Liz Baille.

#333/February '11. The Welders, Touch & Go Fanzine, Rai Ko Ris, Dolly Mixture, Hitman, Straight Arrows, Eskapo Phillippines Tour Diary, Venezuela Scene Report, Olympia Scene Report w/Weird TV, White Boss, Milk Music, Hpp, Hysterics, Son Skull, Rvivr, Hail Seizures, Broken Water, Gun Outfit.

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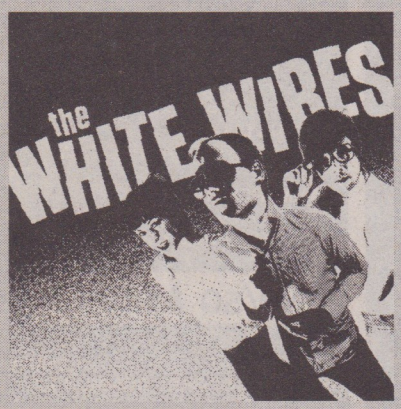

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LETTERS

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Hello MRR—
This is Doug of Mystic Records long time admirer of the magazine. I wish to thank you for the review of the Burning Sons 7". Spot on— feel the same way, and as long as we live we will be keeping punk alive. Mystic was started in the early '70s—I was 82 last month. I remember Tim, he was kind enough to allow me to use your fanzine cover on my early NO FX LP cover, which had been the cover of the earlier *SuperSeven*.

I do not plan on releasing new bands; Mystic does not generate enough income to launch new *SuperSevens*. So I came up with the idea of having guests on Mystic—do not know how far this is going to go yet, but the feedback has been positive on the Burning Sons. I still have a huge catalog of LPs to release on white vinyl and we only run 500 of the white vinyl. Sad to say much of this vinyl was lost in the recent fire, so there might be at least 100 to 150 of each title destroyed. Well I guess that makes the white more collectable. Thank you for your support of the punk scene—you make our world more stable. Thank you to reviewer Robert Collins (WN).
Regards,
—Doug

Dear MRR—
I'm writing this letter to talk about a work experience I had this Christmas Eve. It wasn't that bad. I was in a good mood, helping customers and just loving life. Maybe other people's holiday cheer rubbed off on me. Who knows? Anyways, a coworker of mine who cleans the meat room six nights a week—he's a 59 year old black male, Vietnam Vet, has a problem with alcohol and has been their for five years still making under $9/hour—said something that left an indescribable feeling in my gut. Before leaving, I was helping him empty the rendering barrel full of fat and bones after a long day the meat cutters had getting everyone their prime rib. He said to me: "I remember when I was a kid; people could come to the butcher and get as much of this stuff as they wanted. Then you know what we did? We went home and cooked it. And it was good." "Like the fat" I said. "No, the meat" picking up a bare t-bone "We would take the little bits of meat off this and put it in baked beans. We were in poverty. Now you know what they do with this?" he asked me. "They feed it to pigs."

They were very powerful words, amplified by the fact; it was the day before Christmas. It left me with a complete feeling of empathy. Amazed that people could just live their lives without compassion about other people, or perhaps not even caring to know how other people were living. When he was growing up, born in 1950-1951, America was great if you were a white Christian male. And even the ones who saw what was wrong, life for them was still good and they were "comfortable."

My point of this letter is times have changed, and life isn't good for the majority. The majority being the ever increasing "lower class" which isn't based on race or religion, but based on the fact that money isn't unlimited. We can't just keep printing more. The greedy rich are hoarding it all, with no compassion towards the rest of us. I am only twenty. I don't have a lot of work experience and probably don't deserve to get paid a lot of money but I am aware of my social surroundings and what I see is frightening. I'm just saying the same played out tune of "we need to organize." But I feel this time, there is merit behind the call. We can't demand change every twenty years, but things are getting bad. When will our "day in the sunshine" be?
—An anonymous punk

Hello MRR and the rest of the world—
I'm writing this letter in hopes of networking with people who book, play at, or know of All Ages venues that are currently in existence. It seems over the years in many cities these types of venues have disappeared and we are left with venues that cater to the boring old drunk and stoned punks and burnouts. I remember days of punks throwing on shows where ever they could and not just settling for the scummy dive bar with shitty sound. People would set up shows in any hall, garage, basement, university room, cafe they could find and I'm sure it's still happening. If it is I want to know where and how I can be involved. Looking forward to hearing from anyone who can help me find these all ages places any where in the world cause I'm tired of banging my head against the great wall of the unwashed stoned and drunk punk that just does not give a shit about anything except being stoned and drunk.
—Colin
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Hey Mariam—
This is Joe from Dog Company. You reviewed our record in MRR #332, and I just wanted to mention a few things about your review. First off, I understand you don't like our style of music and that's totally cool, but you mention we are "nationalistic, with borderline sketchy lyrics." Are you implying we are Nazis? I don't really understand where you would get that. Is it because I criticize President Obama? I have not liked the past four presidents. Does not liking the President's policies make us "teabaggers?" Or was it because I do not like Che Guevara and think he was a murderer and a violator of human rights? I wish you would choose your words more carefully next time—you're publishing assumptions are baseless and unfounded. Oh, and we never said we sounded like Vice Squad— we just said we played with them.
Thanks,
Joe

First, thanks for your letter, Joe. Second, I am not a blind middle class "progressive." I could give a shit about your hating the President and Che. That is not where my "assumptions" came from. Intelligent people question things and I know that is what you are doing. I never said you were Nazis. I don't throw that claim around lightly. I assume you are a relatively well read guy that follows politics. Have you been paying particular attention to the lexicon used by the Tea Party as of late? That is why I said some of your songs seem like teabagger shit. As for "possibly nationalistic," your band is named Dog Company! Not to mention the other military references on this record. OK, I retract the term "teabagger" and replace it with "conspiracy theorist militia." I truly appreciate your message in the song "Magic Pill" and your critique in "Germs." "I followed her a couple of blocks home. I said hey baby, are you alone?" Now, that is sketchy.
—Mariam

Hey MRR!—
Thank you for reviewing our first issue of *XXXPOSED*!!! Lots of "hard" work went into that tiny 1/4 size zine! Once a long time ago before we owned our business, some dancers made a zine called *Play Day Everyday* where dancers talked about what it would be like to own the place we work. Copies of that are hard to find, but we hope to come across it to share with our patrons now we do own the business. We are currently brainstorming, writing and collecting entries from our co-op dancer diary for our second issue that will hopefully be ready and available at the SF Anarchist bookfair! Efforts will be made to get #1 scanned and available online at some point, but in the mean time you can find them at the Longhaul in Berkeley, Bound Together on Haight, and we just mailed some out to Quimby's in Chicago! We wanted to let readers know that we have just a handful of issues of #1 available here at the Lusty Lady in our merch booth and in our vending machine. If you'd like to carry *XXXPOSED* in your bookstore or infoshop, please email us at lustyxxxposed@gmail.com. We also have a co-op library that people can donate their zines and erotica to! Just drop one by or mail it straight to the Lusty!
The Lusty Lady
1033 Kearny Street
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XOXOXO
—The Lusties

Hey MRR—
You recently reviewed my band's (Hari Legs) demo tape, but we gave the wrong contact info. The correct address is as follows:
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—Jen Legs

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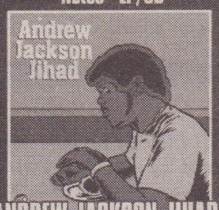
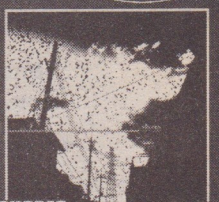
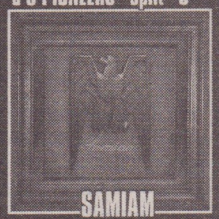


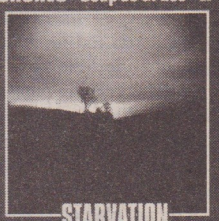
ANDREW JACKSON JIHAD
& 0 PIONEERS "split" 9"



SHORES "Coup de Grace" LP

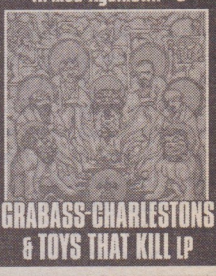


SAMIAM
"Orphan Works" 2xLP/CD



STARVATION
"Armed Against..." 6"

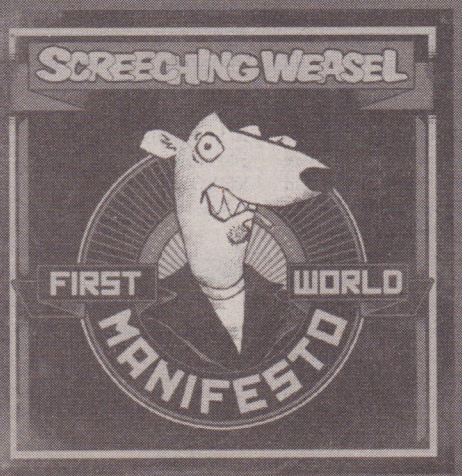
NO IDEA
MAILORDER!



GRABASS CHARLESTONS
& TOYS THAT KILL LP

SCREECHING WEASEL

First World Manifesto



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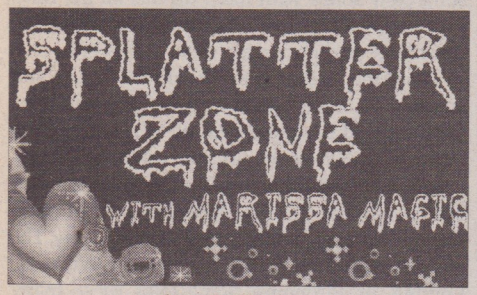
COLUMNS



Year In Review

This year started out weird and then I left the country for a minute and shit got really fun and then ten minutes after my birthday shit became a dull bummer. Not sure why. Anyway, a list of highlights:

I took a trip to Australia this year. One day in Sydney, Nic from RIP Society and I spent hours discussing how "Don't Talk to me" by GG Allin was the perfect pop song. Later that night there was a show in a bar called Good God that's located in the back of a Spanish restaurant downtown. It was like beach themed or something and everyone was wearing Hawaiian shirts. Straight Arrows played and everyone was dancing in grass skirts. They suddenly ripped into a cover of none other than "Don't Talk To Me" and somebody handed me a mic to sing along. It was so rad.

I newly moved into a new pad and since I decided there was ample room in the kitchen for a band and I was buddies with the upstairs I decided to hold a wild party for my golden birthday. My old band Awesomes played a set that was so crazy intense we cut our already short ten minute set even shorter. Then Deep Teens played and they covered the room in glitter and silly string and then covered me in streamers, whipped cream and a princess tiara all while singing the most fucked up version of happy birthday I've ever heard. Later on everyone agreed it was one of the most raging parties ever. The Bay Area Booking Collective put together a rad show featuring Tesseract and Purple Rhinestone Eagle at the luggage store. Tesseract is a blistering metal band consisting of a bunch of ladies. I only caught them once before an extended hiatus that is apparently ending this weekend. Purple Rhinestone Eagle is band whose records I've never really dug but seeing them live is one of those "OK, I'm good, I can go home now" style things.

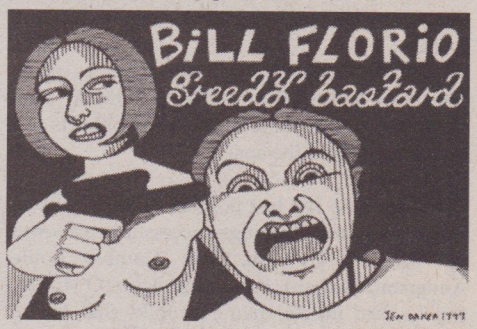
I saw Yoko Ono at the Fox Theater and I realize Yoko Ono falls outside of the bounds of *MRR* but really, it was amazing. Basically two and a half hours of noise wailings that I thought only lasted fifteen minutes. We were in LA and the show we played sucked so we ditched out early to go catch Gay Beast, Raw War, Sisterfucker and XBXRX at Pehr Space. This show was amazing. There was one other band but I missed them and I don't know who they were. Gay Beast play some of the spazziest weirdest most out there music ever, Raw War sound like Flipper, Sisterfucker is heavy and screamy and fast, XBXRX had a lot of flashing lights and covered the audience in paper. Real satisfying times.

There was an epic show at 21 Grand featuring Canadian noisesters Nu Sensae and Shearing Pinx along with Deep Teens, American Splits and my old band Awesomes. This was basically an entire lineup of my favorite bands ever. Deep Teens played weird and gothy terrifying tunes; Meals, the singer for American Splits continues to wow me with her Yoko Ono valley girl eccentric style; Shearing Pinx have gotten way more riffy and are sounding better than ever; Nu Sensae slays everytime; and I cracked my head open on the floor during my band's (Awesomes) set. There was an afternoon BBQ show where Deep Teens, Terraform and Primary Colors played in some tiny apartment in the backyard. I know some other bands played but I don't remember who. Terraform are from Portland and play plodding jerking weirdo spazz; Deep Teens kills as always; Primary Colors blows my mind every time—extremely loud industrial types stuff with synthesizers and random old metal objects for percussion. Cysts played a show with Base Of Bass and Sisterfucker at Huffin House where Max had set up a wall of speakers for the bands to play in front of, the rumors still fly as to whether they were actually all on or not. Sisterfucker raged in dissonance; Base Of Bass rumbled the walls with their slowed down sound of terror and doom; Cysts played some rad doomy hardcore and I bought a copy of everything from their merch table.

American Splits played New Years Eve at this crazy packed party at my friends art space on 16th that kind of had a lot of norm storms, but really the queer punks were in control. Somehow during the Splits' set I ended up with a live mic and sang backups to all of their songs. It was blazing and chaotic and joyful. Right when they finished Ivy and I grabbed mics and started talking about queer art in the streets. News years hit and people were spraying champagne everywhere. Buddy Bag's last show was a rager, hopefully they will come back because regretfully I only caught them once but Buddy Bag played some of the finest bleak punk around. This show was in a packed house and they ended their set with a Nirvana song during which everyone went totally wild and I got smacked into the PA. Radness. There's some newer basement of an art gallery venue in the middle of nowhere here that had a show where Morgan and the Organ Donors got the whole room dancing, Broken Water ripped hard and the Rank/Xerox wrapped it up.

Some other notable releases that didn't make my top ten include Hell Woman who have a demo tape that is total chode metal played by a bunch of girls, complete with sleazy lyrics and weirdly Danzig style vocals. CCR Headcleaner had a demo tape that when I stole one from their merch table they claimed it was one of two. Bleakness and doom and brokenness, went off on a three month tour, half the band returned after two months. Circle Pit swung by and left me with an armload of records, their album Bruise Constellation is a nice slice of southern rock Americana from all the way from Australia. Pigeon Religion put out a slew of seven inches featuring only the bleakest of bleak punk. Bed Wettin' Bad Boys put out a seven inch I adored sounding like the desperation of The Nerves matched with the sloppiness of The Oblivians. Sediment Club put out a seven inch of nice New York art punk throw back on the same label that put out the wondrous early keyboard punk reissue of KEBAB. There is probably more I'm forgetting. Whatever.

Punkymagic.blogspot.com



Recently I helped an eighth-grade teacher from a junior high in the Bronx grade Biology exams. The teacher asked me to grade the multiple-choice questions and total up each section and she would handle the essays with partial credit. I immediately noticed a trend where the majority of kids left a good number of multiple-choice questions blank, but all of them tried to guess at the two extra credit questions. This bugged me a bit because some of the kids would probably stood a good chance at passing the test by sheer statistical luck if they had just guessed. I could see some had a system where they

crossed out the obvious incorrect answers in order to narrow down their chances but more of them just skipped them.

I wondered about this for a day or two and then asked my sister who teaches math to kids around the same age. My sister said, "Yeah, they're chicken, afraid to be marked incorrect. This is new, it's only been the past three or four years I've noticed it." She then went on to suggest that kids are being "tested out" and they probably get burnt from so many tests. Another teacher I talked to agreed that his kids were just as chickenshit and he had to lecture them about the common sense of guessing when you have a choice.

I don't really buy the idea that No Child Left Behind or increased testing would make kids worse at taking tests. I came up with some theories of why kids did things that made sense three or four years ago but have a problem today. When I was in grade school, I completely bullshitted my way through the essays and guessed on the multiple-choice if I didn't study. No one had to teach me how to throw darts at something when blindfolded. Here are some ideas I have for why kids would suddenly start doing this.

The incentive to study facts has been removed by some factor. "Sure I could sit there and memorize thirty definitions and explanations of theory, but in real life I could look that shit up on my phone in twelve seconds." This is similar to the old idea that much of what one learns in school is not practical in everyday life. It used to apply to everything that wasn't reading, writing, and simple math, but now the fact is you virtually will know simple facts by having the ability to look them up instantly all the time. Maybe they resent the fact that their phone was not in their hand during the test?

Perhaps it's not the multiple choice tests in school, it's all the quizzes sent to them on Facebook; they've ignored them electronically when they think the questions are dumb, now they're involuntarily doing the same the next day in class?

People's asses have gotten bigger as pants sizes have tightened; whenever kids think "eeny meeny" their eyes shift to boobs and or butts and they forget about the answers?

All Wrong!

Family Feud has lost popularity as host Steve Harvey fails to get ratings successfully achieved by Richard Dawson, Ray Combs, Louie Anderson, Richard Karn, and John O'Hurley. *Family Feud* injects shame in folks that fail to answer, but people clap and shout "good answer!" even if the first thing blurted out by a contestant is impossible, impractical, not anything someone surveyed on the street would be able to pronounce, or totally lewd. This has been part of the culture so long, and played at hours school children are watching, that when they suddenly tuned out they lost the thought of someone shouting "good answer!" when they guess blindly. No superhero teacher can overcome the influence the second-most inane game show can have over a young impressionable population.

Doomsday

So, with all the 2012 hype, I've decided on my own theory of the demise of the US of A and possibly many many other television markets.

Prediction: in 2012 *Wheel of Fortune* will be cancelled.

I've compiled a list of mass social epidemics and their relation to modifications made to this keystone of the fragile makeup of this nation's populace.

January 6, 1975: *Wheel* debuts. 2,000 Led Zeppelin fans trash the Boston Garden, marking the end of hippies forever

December 1, 1975: Wheel expands to 60 minutes. Lambda Theta Phi—the first Latino fraternity—is established in New Jersey. I'm uncertain of the relation of these two historic events. I believe it is part of the Vanna Code, yet to be cracked.

December 28, 1981: Chuck Woolery cedes control to Pat Sajak. Warner-Elektra-Atlantic raises price of 45 records from $1.68 to $1.98. Robert F. Kennedy's grave at Arlington National Cemetery vandalized.

April 27, 1987: Vanna White issue of *Playboy* released. The US Department of Justice bars the Austrian President Kurt Waldheim from entering the United States, saying he had aided in the deportation and execution of thousands of Jews and others as a German Army officer during World War II.

January 9, 1989: Sajak cuts his *Wheel* time in half, leaving daytime *Wheel* for his own talk show. Newhart jumps shark with infamous jury duty episode.

July 17, 1989: *Wheel* moves from NBC to CBS. First flight of the B-2 Stealth Bomber.

As you can see, a clear pattern between *Wheel* events and world events. In 2012, I predict the following for *Wheel*, which will also spell cataclysmic results for the entire country:

Sajak retires.

Vanna has botched seventh facelift, leaves show.

Vanna replaced by Mary Hart.

"Look at this studio, *once again* filled with glamorous prizes fabulous merchandise including [...] waiting to be won on *Wheel of Fortune*! And now here's your host..."

Sajak replaced by Steve Harvey.

I don't have any helpful information to share this month. I'm in a post holidays, early winter haze where it's hard to work, harder to think, and tougher still to get out of bed each day. This is mostly my fault because I chose to live in Boston ten years ago. There's sand and salt and street water tracked all over the floor of our practice space, which is my "studio" and for all intents and purposes, my other home, when I'm not in my apartment (which doesn't feel much like a home at any rate), and my office, which doesn't have a ceiling, but does have real walls (it's in a warehouse).

Despite the winter gloom though my levels of creativity are as intact as ever and so I've found myself wondering exactly what home recording and making records is all about for me. I do it almost compulsively. The first day of the New Year I was calling friends to meet me and play some new songs with me. I do this all the time, especially since I have had the means to make finished recordings on my own. I'd never be able to afford the studio time it would take, plain and simple. In the past year I've started band after band out of thin air and a couple of ideas, but still my mind keeps racing and the songs keep coming. It's not that I think this stuff really matters, but it's exciting to make something out of nothing. I'm waiting for it to just turn off one day. The ideas stop, and the book closes, and I can take up knitting, or gardening. Some folks let so many ideas slip away in their prime, that when the good stuff is gone, they keep trying anyway, and you get stuck with uninspired regurgitation. I know that one day the well will run dry, and when it does, I hope I can feel content with all that I've done.

When I first was in a band that was able to record, going into the studio was like the biggest deal in my world. It was simultaneously the most exciting and stressful thing I could imagine. But the longer I played music, the less convenient booking time in studios became. The more I didn't want to have to wait to get my ideas onto the canvas, and so through small steps and missteps I found myself inching towards the inevitability of making my own records.

The first record I ever "engineered" was the WASTE MANAGEMENT 7", which was later released on Painkiller Records. I didn't play on it, but it's as important to me as many of the records I have played on. I still can't believe the luck we had. Half of the mics were duct taped to broken drum stands, and most of them were cheap SM-58 rip-off mics from Radio Shack or some place similar. The songs were tracked on a Yahmaha MT-4X cassette 4-track, which I first had borrowed from someone in high school and then bought for myself several years later. The band played their songs, I made a stereo mix of the music, we added some extra guitar, and vocals, and that was basically that. I was positively determined for authenticity and success.

Knowing how tentative of a band WASTE MANAGEMENT was, it felt like there was a fair chance they would only get one shake at documenting these songs. If they went to a standard issue studio these songs may have been neutered by an indifferent or misunderstanding engineer. This is really how I slid into the racket of making recordings of other bands. A lot of them were simply the ones that didn't really have their shit together. And of course a lot of times they were bands I was in. So why would anyone want to do this? I'm not really sure. But I think it's about feeling misunderstood, or at the very least that no one understands what to do better than me.

The challenge was finding the way to make what I wanted, and I suppose what other people wanted, a real thing. If you are making a record and you tell the person recording it what kind of sound you're going for, and they don't know the reference points, that can be a really frustrating thing. It never really happened to me that much, but sometimes it did, and I've seen it happen to other people.

Why does anyone want to make their own records? Because we've all heard joyless, overcooked recordings that ruin otherwise good songs with over production and studio shortcuts. Because we've all heard shoddy lazy production where half the drums are missing and the guitar amp sounds like it's the size of a tin can. Because we know the sound of miscommunication between those playing the music and those recording it for them. Because what we do is, ultimately, not commercial, but personal and we want that personal expression to be as exact and fleshed out as it is in our minds. Along those lines, because we all have a friends band that never could get it together in a real studio, and never made that would-be-classic LP (respect to DBNO; FYA; MACHETTE). Because, in the end, more often than not, DIY does mean something. It means controlling your own destiny and making the most of what you have. It means making more out of less.

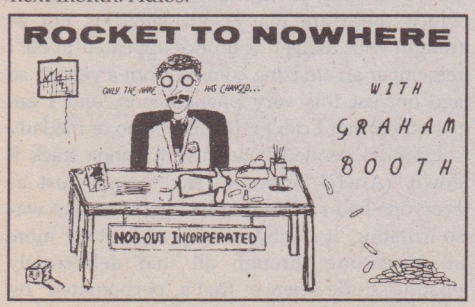
I've played live a lot of times in my young adult life. The more I do it, the less it means to me. That's the truth. It's more and more like dinner theatre.

"For tonight's entertainment a dramatic reading of... "

I'm not saying this to cheapen anyone's experience or to say that it didn't mean *something* to me. But as I get a little older, day by day, hearing something special rolling off the grooves of a record means more to me. Maybe it's a spontaneous explosion of energy, or maybe it's the deliberate culmination of months or years of preparation. Sometimes it's a combination of the two I guess. But a permanent record, a document of those things, that's what seems to stick with me the most.

Maybe I'm obsessed with keeping proof that something happened or existed. Which is why there's a real overcrowding issue in the living room at my apartment as far as vinyl, cassettes, and compact discs are concerned.

Let me apologize now for this weird "search for meaning" bullshit. I know this isn't *Heart Attack*, and I know someone's paying to have this printed. So let me stop here, and assure a return to something much more concrete and useful next month. Adios.



This month I write bearing bad news in the collecting world. The news has slowly trickled out that longtime punk fan and collector extraordinaire Behjan Mirhadi passed away sometime in December. To most of you, this name probably means nothing, especially since Behjan had fallen out of collecting circles for many years until just recently. But to those of us around in the '90s, he was easily one of the most devoted and enduring characters among the collector scum elite. I have to imagine there are few places on the planet where Behjan will be remembered outside of a few hidden message boards, so I am going to devote this column to his memory, partially because I can imagine him thrilled to know he was being eulogized in the pages of *Maximum Rocknroll*.

Maximum Rocknroll is where I met Behjan. Back in the early '90s, one of the only places to get your punk collecting fix on each and every month was in the classified section of *MRR*. At that time I was living in the Chicago suburbs finishing up High School, soon after doing a College tour around the Midwest where I finally settled on U of M Ann Arbor after spending a year in both West Lafayette, IN at Purdue and Chicago at UIC.

Back then living in the Midwest, it was pretty tough to get your punk fix on in the real world. Chicago was a pretty good city for records; the turnover was quick. But if you weren't one of the lucky ones to get first crack at the new arrivals in the bins every week, it was literally impossible to get certain records that would vanish within moments. Records from bands you'd read about in *Welcome To The Scum Pit* articles in *MRR*, or name-dropped as points of comparison in record reviews from *MRR* or *Spin* or *Thrasher*. It literally took me eight years to find a GERMS LP when I started collecting in the '90s!

At some point I started to notice the classified ads in the back of *MRR*, people would list these namedropped cult records in ads, either as trade items or with set prices. I started sending out SASE (that means Self Addressed Stamped Envelope) to people with lists, and I'd get photocopies of looooooong handwritten stapled lists in return. I'd literally spend the next month poring over the one or two trade-lists from that month, trying to figure out what the things I didn't recognize, trying to stretch the theoretical money in my head, figuring out how to get the most bang for my imaginary bucks, trying to figure out what all these ridiculous band names on everybody's want-lists were.

At first I stuck pretty close to the SXE and '80s US Hardcore titles that I knew, sending off for lists in Florida or New York or California or the pinnacle of them all, Michel Bastarache in Massachusetts. Every once in a while, a European seller would post a tantalizing tradelist, but for a time, I stuck with people in the US. After all, three dollars in roundtrip postage seemed like a lot to send off for a couple of pieces of paper. They might not even have anything I wanted on them, and I'd probably miss out on the few obvious titles that sold out long before my snail mail ever crossed the ocean.

At college in the '90s, everybody was first learning about the internet, using email and stumbling onto newsgroups like rec.music.marketplace.vinyl where people would peddle their set sale lists. To think, no more SASEs! Around this time, *MRR*'s classified ads started including email addresses along with mailing address. Finally, those mysterious Worldwide traders like Ingo Eitelbach, Nathalie Verblanck, Marek Urbanski and Mario Panciera were finally at my fingertips!

As I recall, the first time I contacted Behjan, it was through his classified ad in *Maximum Rocknroll* after reading his particularly tantalizing clump of band names in ALL CAPS. Honestly it didn't even seem real: Behjan Mirhadi in Germany? I mean, either this was Rob Noxious' ultimate put on, or there was a deep story in there. I think he may have even told me at some point, all I remember is he was of Middle Eastern (Iranian?) descent living in Germany, but that email correspondence is long forgotten. He's also been around for ages, already active in tape trading circles back in the mid-'80s from his Regensburg home base.

From the beginning, it was apparent that Behjan was a unique personality. I'd already corresponded with several German collectors by then, but Behjan's broken English was far more excited and erratic than any of his counterparts. He was on a mission for the absolute weirdest bottom scrapings from the barely-est punk new wave casualties with propinquity for those from the world's remotest bumblefuck locales. Sure, he championed some bonafide killers like NYCs the NOTHING. But more so, he seemed obsessed with the rarest of punksploito oddities, those records "for the completist" that even completists would warn you away.

For a glimpse at Behjan's most singular of proclivities, all one need do is to look at his sole contribution to the KILLED BY DEATH compilation series: KILLED BY DEATH #999 (the secret's out, he's dead!). In the most idiosyncratic lineups in KBD history, Behjan, well, Behjan was BEHJAN! Just take a look at this lineup:

Side One: HELEN KELLER "Surfin With Steve and Ed Amin" / BLACKHOLES "Captain Payday" / CHRONICS "Test Tube Baby" / AMBULANCE "It's All Up to You" / SCHEMATIX "Second Story" / REALTORS "Guilt By Association" / GANG GREEN & THE AMPUTATORS "I Hate You" / IVAN & THE EXECUTIONERS "I Wanna Kill James Taylor" / FENSICS "Full Time Job"

Side Two: the NOW "I'm Eating off the Fashion Plate" / DOGS "Rot and Roll" / ACCELERATORS "All Right" / MEN IN BLACK "Gypsy Lid" / VECTORS "I Hate Myself" / MACS "Cowboy Song" / CHAIN GANG "Born In Brazil" / ARTHUR'S DILEMMA "Up to You" / SAUCERS "What We Do"

Now I realize that by the time Behjan was putting this compilation together, many if not most of the bonafide "classics" had already been used on earlier compilations. But this doesn't begin to explain some of these selections. Musically speaking, this compilation pretty closely defines mediocrity. I don't deny there are some good, even great songs on here. But the moment you begin to scrutinize specific tracks, the "Why?"

accrues much faster than the "Why Not?"

Many of these could be dismissed as glorified novelty songs, punk accidents if you will (HELEN KELLER, GANG GREEN AND AMPUTATORS, IVAN AND EXECUTIONERS, DOGS, VECTORS, ARTHUR'S DILEMMA). A bunch more are punk wave, with a *heavy* dose of new wave (SCHEMATIX, FENSICS, MEN IN BLACK, MACS, CHAIN GANG). The rest are good enough songs, but never really seemed to catch on compared to some of the other longtime classics (BLACKHOLES, CHRONICS, REALTORS, THE NOW, ACCELERATORS, SAUCERS). I like lots of these, but they require a pretty unique and open-minded audience. KILLED BY DEATH purists have written it off for years.

But for Behjan, I believe all of these selections have a special meaning—this wasn't just some rush job, put a bunch of crap on a record and get it out before the next guy. This is Behjan's shit. Funny, crazy, shock me, novelty punk, infectious keyboard driven punky pop wave, and straight up punk rock that fits the mold to a T like it damn well should. And all of it so goddamn obscure! Seriously. Iowa's DOGS, Baltimore's IVAN AND THE EXECUTIONERS, and Oklahoma's FENSICS are some of the biggest head scratchers in early punk. I can imagine him shaking his head in disbelief, "What, you don't like this? *What is wrong with you*?!"

I believe there is good and bad taste. But with Behjan it wasn't a matter of taste, he was on a totally different trip. It had to do with the story and dedication and emulation and being an individual. The music was important, yes, but not in the same ways that most people listen to music. A lot of people in punk already know what they want their music to sound like. To people like Behjan, they want to constantly discover something new and different and unexpected: The thrill of the unknown. Maybe it sucks, maybe it's awesome, maybe it's both, but it exists. Goddamn it exists!

As time goes on, I have a lot more respect for people like Behjan. It's easy to like good music, the *best* music. But you know, I've been listening to the best punk music for over 15 years now, and even the greatest songs can get tired and played out. Do I ever need to hear MINOR THREAT again? Probably. But there is a lot of other stuff I need to hear too. Lucky for us, guys like Behjan were out there frenetically blazing a trail for us to follow.

So with that, I will bid adieu to that ever-enduring scum enigma that was Behjan Mirhadi. It's too bad nobody had the foresight to get the story directly from his mouth; I imagine it would've been an interesting story. If any of you readers knew Behjan and have any interesting stories or dealings with him, I strongly encourage you to send in a letter for the letters section. I'd hate to see this opportunity pass and be forgotten, as Behjan was one of the good guys. No shady secrets or playing games, he was known on a few occasions to price himself out of records when dealing with old bandmembers to help the bands get more money ($500 NOTHING, $500 HELEN KELLER, and a $3000 FINGERS come to mind!)

Finally, I'll mention that you can still read some of Behjan's erratic communiqués archived on the KBD group on groups.yahoo.com. You may even still find some ancient posts on rec.music.marketplace.vinyl and beyond. One of his more controversial posts was his suggested track list for his proposed KILLED BY HARDCORE volume back in 2001 with such highlights as STIFF LEGGED SHEEP, BLOODMOBILE and MASSACRE GUYS, so without further ado:

Side One: STIFF LEGGED SHEEP "Gardenfull Of Secret Graves" / KREMLIN KORPS "Holier Than Thou" / AUTISTIC BEHAVIOR "Power Head" / BLOODMOBILE "Little Boy Blue" / LEPERS "Rock Is Sick" / WARDS "25 Killed" / WHITE TRASH "I Hate My Toes" / KORO "700 club" / RUIN "Love Dog"

Side Two: YOUNG & THE USELESS "Home Boy" / THE WORST "High Velocity" / DDT "E.T." / LOCKJAW "Nazi Dentist" / MECHT MENSCH "Acceptance" / FINAL CONFLICT (Minnesota) "Self-Defeated" / WILLFUL NEGLECT "Herpes (Will I Get)" / MASSACRE GUYS "Italy" / NEON CHRIST "Doom-After"

The crucifix tumbles to the cathedral floor. It lands with an unceremonious clatter, snagging my tights on the way down. I drop to my knees. It could be the rapture or it could be my sinuses again, but I'm paralyzed for a second, light-headed and tingling under the cash desk. As I regain composure, scooping up our silver-plated lord and savior up by his oozing, naily ankles, it becomes apparent that there's a slight bend in his teensy legs, something off in his curiously bulbous feet. Something not quite holy. An error in the mold, maybe. There are thousands of these little guys hung off just about every surface, piously crowned, designer stubble, but it's this one, with the delicious implication of a cloven hoof, that's chosen to make himself known to my un-stigmata'd, sweaty hands. It's almost imperceptible visually, but that sort of angle will not survive the feverous fingering he's about to receive, there at the secret climax of the rosary, alone with this pale Russian crone who I suspect, like all these people milling around touching up the icons, really, really fancies Jesus. Miraculously, the thin plastic casing has survived the fall from grace with barely a scratch, triggering a grimace of hollow joy, handing over the fallen Christ wrapped in paper and announce finally, like the rinky-dink Judas that I am, "That'll be 6.99, please."

***

A few years ago, a kind of shitty piece of state-sponsored art (by a Turner prize nominee, no less) got pasted around the London underground. Its focal point seemed to get stuck in my head on every journey, a slogan repeated, getting louder and louder until I thought I was losing my mind. It looked like the cover of some difficult second album by a coulda-been new wave band, but it read in bold psychedelic capitals, "If you don't like your life you can change it."

It's around this time of year that for a few short days it's culturally permissible to take charge of one's own destiny. That sentiment from the tube train becomes an accusatory platitude. We make loud noises about the stuff that we will do, or will no longer do, because we dread the moment that, should we fail, our friends and family will look at the floor/raise their eyebrows and bite their lips/suppress a smirk or a maybe even offer a pointed "I told you so." As a result, for a couple weeks around that time, the lifestyle media is awash with advice on how to make your proposed changes happen. There are celebrity resolution columns, some dieting hogwash, a puff piece for some productivity software. The less cynical amongst you might argue that there's still some innate value in the life audit that ensues as a result, even if we do end up mopping up all hope with the fresh hell of the New Year's Day hangover. By the time this is published, though, the purchases made in the best of faith to help achieve new dreams might have been returned, or at the very least the leaves turned over seem paler than their well-worn, comfy other sides, and malaise has set in. I would like to think that I am good at giving advice, although not to myself, and in that spirit I can happily state with certainty that if you fucked up your resolution then don't worry cos you're living in the real, and big changes rarely ever occur starting from January first 00:00. Not that I'm wishing to come over all self-help, but these days that tell-tale glint of sadness lingering below the surface of even the most seemingly satisfied acquaintances makes me feel like we, the punks, need to start sorting each other out. As far as resolutions go for this year, cut the shit and call a friend.

***

This column perhaps is shorter and more fractious owing to a few shifts in the St. Paul's Cathedral gift shop (see above) plus top-ten writing duties that have consumed my thoughts a little and handed me a strident inability to not think in lists. Also, I had a few days of band practice with a new band that I'm really excited about. It's scary, but I can legitimately report, after some difficult early days and three years of owning one and feeling guilty: ladies and gentlemen, I can play the guitar. Fuck the caveats (of which there are many), girl-shred is not as fraught with danger as it once appeared to be. I remember an amazing column from a year or so ago on just this very phenomenon, and I am pissed off that I can't remember who of the lady columnists penned it because I wanna track it down. (Ariel?) Suffice to say though, just as everyone had said in that inciting tone that was so irritating, it *is* kind of easy, and totally more about cutting through all that deliberately opaque dude-science that's perpetuated by morons who like to pretend that knowing how

you *really* pronounce "Yngwie" is going to get them laid. It's mostly just a collection of contrary opinions, one of which you will eventually end up settling for yourself, when you know what works for your own sweet self. I made Steve come with me and asked the guy to buy strings because Denmark Street (where pretty much *all* the guitar shops are in central London) strikes a low, grubby, and detuned note of hopeless fear in my vagina. Not a single female employee, just legions of Mike McCreadyites that love to opine with a distracted authority on useless factoids totally non-pertaining to your question, or just deliberately not answer you ("*Well* that depends what you mean by..."). Of course there's always the back-of-my-head thought that this entire conspiracy to stop us being shredlords (or indeed shredladies) is all in my head and that the sexist feedback loop of guitar shop assholes is nothing but a form of insecurity tinnitus impeding my listening. This viewpoint is usually backed up when visiting these places with male friends who can't understand why I seem to be tuned to "fuck that guy!" when in these places. A word of warning though that I think everyone can get behind: after all of that, whatever you bloody well do don't become one of them! Sure, you might be a lady who's got way into tube amps or talking about tone in a really intense way, but if you can't communicate that without making other people feel small or ill-equipped, maybe let the riffs do the talking. Conversely, the internet is great (did you know?), you don't have to speak to anybody, you can buy pedals there, watch pallid goatees show you step by step how to lower the action without ever having to meet their hollow eyes, all putting (phantom) power into these undersized and not-that-dexterous hands without any of the "Um, well, is this for you, or...?"
Tapes n trades to bryonybeynon@gmail.com. *Cmon.*

I know this will be a bit dated by the time this issue comes out, but: Happy New Year! 2010 was a hell of a year for raw punx everywhere that saw a ton of fantastic releases and exciting new bands. Here's hoping that 2011 brings more of the same—and that I make it to Texas to check out ISTERISMO this summer!

Hardcore Survives rounded out 2010 with two new EPs by some newer bands from Tokyo. The first is UNARM's *Hypocrisy* EP, a primitive crasher crust killer that puts their earlier CD appearance to shame. This is (pretty much) all fast blown-out crust with an approach to distortion that reminds me more of THINNER or KUOLEMA then the usual suspects. The highlights are the meaty-yet-dirty bass tone and insane bass playing (dude is just flying all over that neck!) plus Nanae's vocals, which walk a brilliant line between feral scream and punk snot. The B-side is as good a five- or six-minute block of hardcore as I've heard this year—"Mega crusher anti system noize crust" indeed.

The other new Hardcore Survives release is the ASOCIAL TERROR FABRICATION *Under the Dark Force* EP, a record that from the DEVIATED INSTINCT-inspired cover art on looks back to good ol' '80s stenchcore. Besides an AXEGRINDER-ish atmospheric intro and a brief sample, ATF primarily play some seriously downtuned, extremely lo-fi DOOM/EXTREME NOISE TERROR style crust. The dual vocals are particularly reminiscent of classic Jones and Vane. Like the '80s bands that influence them, they're not all fast all the time, though the blasts do come and go. Sure, this is almost brutally unoriginal, but if you heard this not knowing who it was you'd swear it was a great lost Britcore demo, and that means a lot. Seriously, it's as good as if not better than a lot of the material they're influenced by! Short of access to a time machine, I'm really not sure how a bunch of dudes from 2010 Tokyo managed to so completely capture the sound of a specific time and place. If you've ever worn a DOOM patch or even flipped through *Trapped in a Scene*, you need this record ASAP. Fortunately both this and the UNARM don't seem to be flying off the shelves, so hit your favorite purveyor of fine imported crust while you still have a chance. Unless you live in Japan, in which case you could probably just go to the record store, I dunno. (Both available from Hardcore Survives, http://hcsurvives.exblog.jp/)

I would tell you about the triumphant MAUSER set I witnessed when I picked up their new EP, but due to some age issues they were barred from the bar where I was supposed to see them. So it goes, though it was a grave disappointment given the raves I heard about their performances at Chaos in Tejas this year. The rest of the bands were great (VERRATERISCH, YODOKAI, RULETA RUSA, DOPECHARGE) though, so a good time was had by me regardless. Sorry MAUSER, but if it's any consolation your new record is fucking great. These songs have a rocking edge that's halfway between TOTALITAR and SKITKIDS, mostly due to the propulsive drumming and the way the bass leads the riffing. Sure, this does have a thin veneer of fuzz and a bit of reverb on the vocals that may endear it to the noize crowd, but essentially this is Swedish-style hard-fucking-core. In a lot of ways this reminds me VACCUUM, not so much in the exact sound as in the energetic approach and the absolute sincerity. The non-tour version will be available by the time this issue comes out, so check in with Vinyl Rites. (Vinyl Rites, www.vinylrites.net)

One last note: because I'm sure it will be covered in this issue I won't say more than that the new SLANG LP is far and away their best work and a late contender for best of 2010 status. Also, listen to ELECTRIC FUNERAL (two EPs and an LP in 2010 plus an upcoming split? Productivity!), and if by some crime of circumstance you don't already worship DISCHARGE, there are swank new reissues available from Havoc Records. Good cheer for the new year, new demos, etc., can be sent to me c/o *MRR* or e-mail to agunderwood@gmail.com.

"You wanna see something really neat?" asks Paul, or "Terrible Paulzee" as he introduced himself to me a few days earlier.

I had been at this local dive bar called "Friday Night Live", which wasn't as much a bar as much as it was a doublewide trailer in a parking lot near campus.

There were lots of trailers around.

After all, it was Floriduh; Gainesville to be exact.

The year was 1979 and I had just started my second quarter of college.

"I'm Paul," said this tall, wavy-brown-haired guy with really thick glasses. He was wearing a shirt that read "Destroy" with a swastika below it.

I couldn't help but stare at it.

"Oh, that," he explained, "I'm a Nazi. Gas the Jews, I say."

I just shrugged my shoulders and said, "Cool".

It was the early days of Punk Rock, and everybody was into their own thing.

I liked the Ramones, Rocky Horror, and the thought of losing my virginity a second time since the first time didn't work out so well.

Turns out Paul liked the Ramones, Nazis, Kiss, and the band we were there to see, the Press, who used the "SS" logo at the end of their band title. Like Kiss.

Suddenly the band kicks into their "big hit", "Sun Says Burn". Maybe it was "Son". Who knows?

Anyway, as Nick, the angry bassist, yelled into the mic, and Phil, the guitarist/singer, grunted along, Paul and I found ourselves jumping up and down to the music. This would later be called "pogoing".

Whatever.

"My friends call me Terrible Paulzee," Paul yelled to me as we were both getting some serious air with our jumps. I was doing the Johnny Ramone thing, with my knees tucked up behind my back while Paul would spread his legs as far out as he could. The Dee Dee Ramone thing.

"I'm George," I yelled, "but they call me Pussy."

"Nice to meet you, George," said Paul as we shook hands between jumps. I liked this guy.

***

Later that night, while sharing a twelve pack of Black Label beer in the parking lot of the dou-

blewide trailer, Paul and I got on the subject of bands.

Paul told me he liked the Press a lot, and the Ramones and Sex Pistols as well. I told him the Press ruled and so did the Ramones, but I was iffy about the Sex Pistols.

"What's wrong with them?" he asked, through his coke-bottle lenses, and his wire-frame body stood up to take a leak onto the middle of Thirteenth Street, the main drag of the University of Floriduh.

"I dunno," I replied, "I just don't get it I suppose. The singer sounds like Bozo the Clown and the lyrics make no sense."

"Yeah," said Paul, "but the bass player wears a swastika, so they're cool."

"Uh-huh," I replied.

"Do you mind if I ask you something?" says Paul as he shakes it a few times and puts it back in his pants.

"Sure," I say as I take the last swig of the sweet-tasting beer that has that scent of rotting flesh, like those rats that would die in our walls on West Fourth Street in New York City at my mom's place. It'd stink for a week and somehow my mom and my stepfather, Nick, didn't mind the odor. After a while I guess I didn't either, as I was drinking something that tasted a hell of a lot like it now.

"With your big nose and all," Paul started, "well, are you a Jew?"

"Yeah," I told him, "but my parents didn't really raise me with any religion."

"Doesn't matter," said Paul, "when the Nazis come back, all the Jews are gonna get it."

"Well," I said, as I opened another can of creeping death, "here's to that day!"

Paul and I knocked beer cans together and had a good laugh.

The idea of him being a Nazi was so silly, I found it more Monty Python than menacing. I mean, the guy looked like he belonged in a nerdy science fiction movie, what with his Coke-bottle glasses and knee pads he'd like to wear and his hair was *total* Jewish, so it made me giggle. He was more like "Twit of the Year" than "Twat of the Third Reich".

Other kids did yell at Paul that night for wearing that shirt.

They call him "a fucking Nazi" or "goose-stepper".

He'd reply they need a shower with Zyklon-B.

Of course, I didn't say anything. If Paul had gotten his ass kicked, it probably wouldn't have been a bad thing. Plus, I didn't get the nickname "Pussy" for nothing.

"So, you play an instrument?" asked Paul after about five beers, each.

I told him I owned a Vantage guitar I purchased three months ago in New York, and knew two chords. The "E" one and the "A" one. As bar-chords, too.

Paul said he played bass, "like Gene Simmons," and told me we should start a band.

I asked if that would be cool since I only knew two notes.

"With the three I know, that would make five. Enough for a band, I say!"

I loved the way Paul declared things so the band was to begin. We were to meet the following day at his apartment. The one he shared with Nick, the bass player of the Press.

***

As I walked into Nick and Paul's off-campus apartment, the striking black, red, and white *giant* swastikas were the first things to catch my attention.

"Cool, huh?' asks Paul as he offers to hang up my leather jacket.

Polite Nazi. I liked that.

Then Paul shows me all these World War Two books he has on the Third Reich.

"Those were the days," he reminisces, as if he was even alive back then. So I tell him so.

"A guy can dream, can't he?" replies Paul.

Finally we get down to business and Paul shows me his bass. It's a beautiful Rickenbacker, black, with white edges. It's shiny and not Punk Rock at all. I tell him so.

When he looks at my Vantage guitar, with its sanded-wood look and yellow sound knobs, he tells me the same thing.

We both have a good laugh.

"So," asks Paul, "can you sing?"

I tell him it's hard enough to figure out where to put my fingers every time I have to change a chord, so, no.

He tells me he has the same problem, so we agree we need a singer.

But who? And where? It was 1979 in Gainesville, Florida.

Anyone who could sing was covering Charlie Daniels, Lynyrd Skynyrd, or that new sensation from Tallahassee, Molly Hatchet.

We also decided that we needed a band name… but that would have to come when we got a singer.

***

About a week later we'd heard about this guy named Bob. He was part of the "punk scene" in Gainesville, which meant he was one of ten people we probably knew.

I got his phone number and arranged to meet him at Paul's apartment since he had a car and I still lived in the dorm.

Paul picked me up that day and when we got back to his place, there was this shitty white Toyota parked right in front of Paul and Nick's place.

As we got our of Paul's car, Bob got out of his.

We were amazed. There he was, this scrawny little guy with a cigarette in one hand and a Diet Pepsi in the other. He wore his hair in a shag-cut like the Beatles, and he had a belt-buckle on that was so cool it got him in the band.

"Where'd you get that fucking kick-ass belt buckle?" I asked him as he took out a vacuum cleaner from the trunk of his car.

It said "Electro-Lux" in lightning type letters and it looked like something Superman or Batman would wear.

"I *have* to wear it," complained Bob. "It's for work and it's so heavy every time I sit down it falls and crushes my balls.'

"Cool," both Paul and I said at the same time.

It turned out Bob sold vacuum cleaners. Well, tried to sell. This was his second day on the job, hence the button up shirt and belt buckle. And the machine in his hand.

"Whatcha doin'?" asked Paul.

"Do you mind if I demonstrate this fine product to you guys?" asked Bob.

We shrugged our shoulders and Bob carried the thing up the two flights of stairs to the apartment. As he walks in, he doesn't even seem to notice the swastikas or anything.

"Need some help with that?" Terrible Paulzee asks.

"Naw," says Bob, "just show me where your outlet is."

Paul points to it, right next to his kick ass 1970s stereo system, and says, "But Bob…"

Bob puts his fingers over his lips and shushes him.

Then he takes an ashtray full of cigarettes and joint roaches and pours it all over the thick brown shag carpet.

"Bob, um…" starts Paul.

"What we have here, gentlemen," Bob begins, "is the world's best vacuum cleaner. Not only does it come with an assortment of attachments to get into every nook and cranny in your house, it is extremely powerful at sucking."

Paul and I look at one another and decide to ignore the joke.

"While others on the market claim their machines are best," Bob explains, as if he memorized the instructional pitch, "the Electro-Lux is the future, *now!*"

"But Bob…" Paul starts.

"Let me just plug this in and you'll see how fast that mess disappears," says Bob.

Bob takes the plug from the machine and puts it into the wall. Paul tries to say something but Bob stops him.

"And if you think this mess isn't enough, watch this!"

Bob walks across the room, finds another ashtray, and dumps that one as well all over Paul's nice brown shag carpet.

"Now I just turn this on and…" says Bob.

He hits the power switch on the gizmo and nothing happens.

Nothing at all.

"Errr," mumbles Bob, "let me see here…"

He starts to hit the machine, then kick it.

Meanwhile, Paul's carpet is a mess and the room stinks like one giant ashtray.

At this point Paul starts to laugh.

Bob, getting more and more frustrated, begins to apologize to Paul, telling him he doesn't know what's wrong with the damned thing.

"The outlets in this room are dead," Paul explains. "I tried telling you. And no, I don't have any extension cords."

Bob's jaw drops to the ground and his skin turns a more ghostly white.

I'm not sure whether to laugh or hide. After all, Paul is a Nazi and he might kill Bob. That poor scrawny little fellow. Just wanted to be a singer in a punk band and now he's dead.

Suddenly Paul breaks out in hysterics, falling to his kneepads, laughing.

"Dude," he says to Bob, "you should have seen your face!"

Bob doesn't know what to say or do.

Paul continues to laugh and tells Bob he's "totally in the band!"

I tell him I agree. Although we haven't heard him sing note one, this guy is certainly "Mr. Entertainment". And that's Punk Rock

To celebrate, Paul tells us we should all come outside where he wants to show us something.

***

"You wanna see something really neat?" Paul says to Bob and I as we stand behind his apartment building in front of a draped trailer hitched to a pickup truck.

Bob and I shrug our shoulders Then Bob says, "After the mess I made of your place, anything!"

Paul says "Cool!" and takes the tarp off the trailer to reveal a *huge* pig. With horns and stuff near its mouth. When it saw us it grunted and then ran at the bars.

Bob and I jumped back like ten feet.

"What the fuck?" I say, really shaken up.

"We're having a roast tonight," explains Paul, "and this is the guest of honor!"

I start to wonder how a pig is going to sit in a chair and have jokes made about him by famous comedians.

"My pig has no nose," Sammy Davis, Jr. would say.

"How does he smell?" Rodney Dangerfield would ask.

"Awful," Sammy would say as he points his fingers at the camera and winks.

Suddenly a loud *"blam!"* shakes me from my thoughts and the next thing I see is blood. Tons of it. All over Bob.

And Bob is staring at me.

So I look down and see blood all over myself and feel it in my hair. So I reach up to wipe it away and my hand finds something wet, slippery and solid.

I take it off and look at it. It's a chunk of pig brains.

Suddenly I feel like Bob and I are the pranks of some high school prom joke gone bad out of *Carrie*.

I'm covered in blood, as is Bob, so I do what comes natural to me.

I start to cry.

As I'm doing so I look at the ex-pig, now lying at the bottom of his cage, and my eyes follow the pig's body to Paul's hand, where he's clutching a smoking Luger. A real Nazi gun.

"Didn't mean to scare you," says Paul, with this really evil grin.

Bob says he wasn't scared at all, and through sobs, I say the same thing.

"Cool," says Paul. He throws us a couple of towels he takes out from the back of the pickup and says, "Help me carve up this motherfucker."

I would have told him I preferred not to if I wasn't so busy running as fast as I could back to the safety of my dorm room and KKK roommate.

I think the tears washed away most of the blood on my face.

But by the time I got "home" I for sure stank like a pig.

Take My Life, Please.

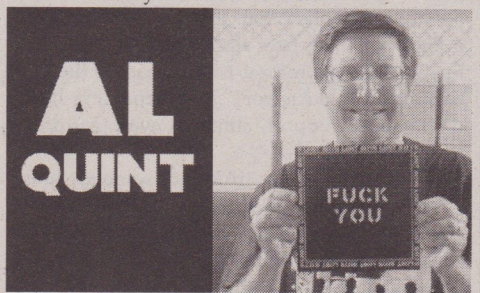
Endnotes:

The above is an excerpt from a story I wrote for "Criminal Class Press", who do a series of books with short stories. This was one. Each book is nothing less than *great*, and I have found myself reading each cover to cover, something I never do. The stories are that good. Check them out atwww.criminalclasspress.com. Oh, the story above is from the humble beginnings of Roach Motel if you couldn't guess!!!

Todd C.'s *Clown Sounds + Clown Frowns* may be just about the most Punk Rock album I've heard in years. If you know Todd or his band—formerly F.Y.P., now Toys That Kill—you might guess at what this sounds like. But you would be wrong. Todd writes and performs songs that appeal to the ancient lullaby in us all. In Punk Rock style, of course. It is totally unique and hella addictive and haunting. If the world were a fair place, he'd win a Grammy for this one.

Out on Recess Records now is the new Riverdales album, *Tarantula*. When I opened the thing and saw that my old pal Simon Lamb is playing guitar for them, I was totally excited. Simon is like the coolest guy in the world! Anyway, you know how Dee Dee wrote all the cool "spyesque" songs for the Ramones, like "Commando" and "Havana Affair", and how cool those songs are? And you know how Joey wrote all the love songs and how some were good and some were just okay? This album is like some of those "all right" Joey songs. Nothing that blows you away. It's sorta like the first Riverdales album, if you like that sort of thing. "Storm the Streets" and "Phase Three" are more my speed, and are better than the last albums the Ramones themselves put out. I say this with pain because I really want to like this. A lot. The good news is there are a couple of *great* songs here that are as good or better than some other great Riverdales songs. "Girls Town" is one of them. Catchy and way fucking cool. And neat. Also "Bad Seed Baby". But "Girls Town" is the hit here. Ben, go back to the "retarded" lyrics… you are an idiot savant when it comes to that! Now, all that being said, buy this anyway to support a great record label and a great band. But if you *really* need a Ramones-type fix, get both of the Rydells' albums. Classic spy shit there, much like one of the best Ramones/spy albums ever written, *Back Channel Broadcast* by the Lillingtons. One of my all time favorite albums. Ever.

Happy New Year, and May 2011 bring you all whatever it is your heart desires!!!!



So it's now 2011—is it ""twenty eleven"" or ""two thousand eleven""? Don't know, and some smarmy fucks are trying to convince us this is now the second decade of the twenty-first century. These are the same smarmy fucks that said that 2000 didn't signal the start of the twenty-first century. There's a local TV commentator named Jon Keller who definitely falls under the ""smarmy fuck"" category—in fact, I think his photo is in the dictionary next to the definition. OK, that's an exaggeration, but he's one of these annoying commentators/pundits who appears on various local TV and radio stations. He's occasionally witty, I'll grant him that, but it's more than offset by his unflappable smugness. Ten years ago, I'm pretty sure he was one of the people who said 2001 was the actual start of the new millennium. If it wasn't him, it was that kind of individual. He was probably right, technically, but it's all in the delivery, you know? And last year, the same sort of people said that 2009 didn't signal the end of the decade. Once again, probably correct. I imagine there's a differentiation between the start of the decade and the start of the ""tens"" or ""teens"" or whatever they are. I never did figure out what to call the '00s, but it's over now so it's a moot point unless I vocally reminisce about how things were back in the '00s, like I do with the '60s, '70s, '80s, et al. Actually, I'd rather forget most of the '00s for any number of reasons.

What I noticed, even at the start of 2011, was that various Christmas commercials were still on the air. This was as late as January second or third and I think they've *finally* disappeared. Most of them tend to get on my nerves, but the ones that particularly drove me nuts this year were for Hyundai with the cutesy duo singing such holiday perennials as ""Jingle Bells"" and ""Deck The Halls"". The offending party is called pomplamoose (I refuse to capitalize their name) and the commercials were exceedingly annoying. Just the way the female vocalist looked sideways at the camera with her innocent, doe-like eyes, meant to melt people's hearts. It had quite the opposite effect on me and, as it turns out, many people I discussed it with. My less-than-favorable response wasn't helped by the fact they seemed to run every two minutes during the entire month of December and into early January, as I said. I did have one smarmy fuck point out to me that ""Jingle Bells"" was technically a winter song so there wasn't a moratorium on its performance. OK, he's not a smarmy fuck, just a wiseass. As for Pimplemoose, uh, Pomplamoose, someone called them a sweater and beard band. I figured for sure they were from Brooklyn but it turns out they're from California. That's not going to get them off the hook.

Speaking of a TV ad that annoyed me, but for a different reason, there's the ""Buzzsaw"" Toyota commercial. A clean-cut, ""norm"" couple are at the dealership, browsing at cars when, all of a sudden, someone calls out ""Buzzsaw?"" That someone is a thirty-something guy dressed, if I remember correctly, in a somewhat tacky t-shirt and jeans—I can't find the ad online so I'm going by memory here—this gentleman is informed by Buzzsaw that ""it's Dan, now."" The dude tells him they're getting the band back together and asks Dan/Buzzsaw if he's in. Before the guy can open his mouth, his wife says he's not in and Dan sheepishly repeats it. It would seem that Dan's been well conditioned to believe that it's time to put such seemingly childish pur-

suits as playing in a band behind him. Time to grow up. Knuckle down, buckle down, do it do it do it! Actually, that last line comes from a wonderful song called ""You Can't Roller Skate In A Buffalo Herd"" by Roger Miller. Not the MISSION OF BURMA guitarist but the author of the classic ""King Of The Road"". The song informs the listener that while one can't, indeed, roller skate in a buffalo herd, ""you can be happy if you've a mind to"", and that ""all you've got to do is put your mind to it / Knuckle down, buckle down, do it do it do it!"" I actually first heard that song on a college radio show maybe ten years ago and it's something I hum every once in awhile. Sounds like Roger was encouraging people to follow their dreams. Do what makes you happy! It's too bad Dan has perhaps been made to believe that's just not possible. A shame, eh? Cajoled into thinking that there's an age limit for certain avocations. I sure as hell got that from certain family members who wondered when I was going to outgrow going to shows, writing about music (I swear, I do that in this column sometimes!), DJ-ing, even making pathetic attempts at playing in bands. Fortunately, the incredible woman I married has never done that to me. She knows how important it is to me and how much a part of my life it's been and she doesn't force me to give up what I love.

Hmm..... maybe I've been watching too much TV lately, where it's gotten to the point that I over-analyze ads. I *was* a marketing major in college, after all. I've also been drinking *way* too much coffee lately. That's probably what spurred on my ranting comments and sentiments in the previous paragraphs. We usually brew our own and put it in the fridge overnight since Ellen and I prefer it cold. I only drink it hot when nothing else is available, no matter what time of year it is. The other day it was stronger than usual and one glass kept me going the whole day. This was actually the day I record *Sonic Overload* and I tend to have a bit more adrenalin than usual with all the running up and down the stairs from my work area to the room where I store my records. I kept waiting for the inevitable crash to occur and was dreading it because the ones that happen on Monday tend to be more severe. It just hits me hard and the jolt of energy, of inspiration, dissipates really quickly. Unless the show is close to prepped, it can drag out the process as I try to compensate for the sudden energy depletion. Not this Monday, though. Ellen had actually brewed it, and I think she makes it quite a bit stronger than I do, because the rush literally lasted twelve hours. There was no need for the late afternoon half-glass to keep me going. And listening to the playback of the show, it was pretty obvious I was wired. Totally wired? Maybe I should have played that FALL song, although I didn't drink a jar of the stuff nor did I take ""some of *these!*"" I imagine Mark E. Smith meant speed. By the way, listening to the FALL is something that is always highly recommended. Mark E. is my kind of curmudgeon. In the fall of '09 I wrote about how much I loved ""Hey! Student"" from *Middle Class Revolt* and its berating of the sort of snot-nosed college students who invade Boston every fall. Now that I think about it, I wrote about ""Totally Wired"" in that column, too. Well, the greatness of those songs is always worth mentioning every once in a while.

I'm typing like a maniac right now. Not just because I'm working on a deadline but because of the caffeine. I feel like I've been on an amusement park ride all day. I'm getting shit accomplished for once. I was working on a few tasks that will hopefully make me a few bucks (nothing illicit—well, I guess that depends on your definition, but I plead the Fifth). It's not my primary motivation in life but there are bills to pay and I need that extra money right now. Our fucking COBRA insurance payment just went up over $100 a month. I won't elaborate further—y'all know my opinion on health insurance. If you don't, refer to some of my recent columns. Although every time I see that orange-faced motherfucker John Boner, uh, Boehner—you know, the new Speaker of the House—on TV, I have malevolently violent thoughts. And while part of my visceral venting here is no doubt partially fueled by the coffee, it's not the *entire* reason. Endless prattling about how they're going to overturn ""ObamaCare."" Jesus, I'd hate to see what these puds/puddettes would be saying if there had been *real* health insurance reform. You know, like a public option or (*gasp*) single payer.

Anyway, I skipped the home-brewed coffee today. Nope, I had a craving for a bagel with my coffee. I woke up on the wrong side of the bed, so to speak. So much that I did a take-off on a BIOHAZARD song and started singing, ""on the wroooooong side of the bed!""—their one good song, by the way. It's true. BIOHAZARD did, indeed, have one good song. Anyway, I wanted something more substantial and cereal just wasn't going to cut it so it was over to Dunkin Donuts for a toasted bagel and a medium iced rocket-fuel. It was 24 degrees out at the time, and I was bundled up in my winter jacket, hat, and gloves, but that's what I wanted and this is America, goddamnit. They haven't outlawed coffee and bagels—yet. I imagine the anti-Semitic segment of the Republican Party might consider the latter food item as part of some sort of Jewish conspiracy. There are evil bakers slipping a mind-controlling substance into the ingredients and it's going to turn us into a bunch of one-world-government-supporting sheeple. But those Republicans probably don't have the numbers to accomplish that. It's not the same as re-branding French fries as ""freedom fries,"" following France's refusal to take part in the US's bogus ""war on terror"". The renaming had a modicum of support, although even that didn't last too long.

The coffee did the trick and, some six hours later, I still seem to be feeling at least some of the effects of it. I'm typing so fast that it's causing the carpal tunnel in my left wrist to kick up. That was diagnosed last year. Following my shoulder surgery in late 2009, a month in the sling caused soreness in my forearm. I had to undergo a battery of tests and it was determined that I have an irritated nerve plus mild cases of carpal tunnel and arthritis in my wrist. For this information, I had the pleasure of forking over $626.24 for those tests due to my deductible. I had one more follow-up to find out if the nerve was getting better and it really hadn't. The doctor, during his two-minute visit, said it'd get better on its own eventually and said, ""OK, guy?"" Now I'm an informal person, I don't care if people call me by my first name in more-or-less ""professional"" situations, but don't call me ""guy,"" not when I'm paying that much money. Not when you're being rather flippant about my situation—and it *hasn't* gotten better, by the way. He should actually call me ""sir"" and bow in my presence. That's short of kissing my ass, of course. It could have been worse—I suppose he could have called me ""dude."" I know I referred to one of the gentlemen in the Toyota ad as a ""guy"" but this is different. It was more like the Right Guard commercial in the early '70s where a man opens his medicine cabinet and there's someone inside the mirror who says, ""Hi, guy!"" Yes, I realize I'm mentioning an ad that's forty years old and 99% of you have no idea what I'm talking about. Just humor an old man, OK? But I haven't gone back to that ""sports medicine"" crime syndicate, even though my shoulder, arm and wrist aren't perfect. Unless the pain gets excruciating, I'll live with it. Sorry, *guy*. Maybe a second opinion would be in order but I just don't have the patience for it, anymore—or money, at the moment.

Time for more coffee! Oh wait, I'm done. I think I'll have some more anyway. Damn caffeine addiction!

Al Quint, PO Box 43, Peabody, MA 01960, suburbanvoice@earthlink.net, www.sonicoverload.net

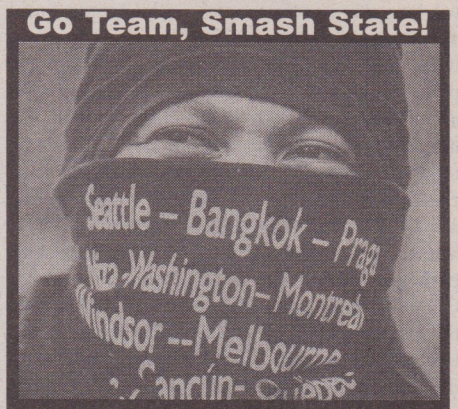
I recently had the good fortune of being able to attend the Gustav Stickley exhibit now on offer at the Newark Museum in New Jersey. Since I doubt many people visit Newark on purpose, I might point out that it was a very short train ride from Penn Station in Manhattan, and well worth the trip. I would recommend it to anyone who happens to be in the area, even if you aren't a fan of early twentieth century furniture, art, and design. Stepping into the exhibit from the streets of Newark you are reminded at just how debased the aesthetic in America today is. Compared to the early twentieth century our environment is tawdry, cheap, and ugly to an extreme. Cars are ugly, residential architecture cartoonish, urban streetscapes dominated by parking lots and chain stores, a handful of tastefully designed and scaled historic buildings sit between brutalist and postmodern concrete monuments to bad trends in architecture. Unfortunately, unlike leisure suits or platform shoes, out of date "cutting edge" architecture sticks around long past its

due date. Back to my day at the Newark Museum. I took a deep breath as I stepped back into the early twentieth century. It was so refreshing to be surrounded only by furniture, interiors, artwork, and architecture that were thoughtfully and tastefully designed. Most people of course know Stickley for his (and his brothers') furniture. But Stickley was also instrumental in transmitting the ideals of the English arts and crafts movement to America. This was primarily through his magazine *The Craftsman* but also via his (and his employee Harvey Ellis's) groundbreaking furniture designs. This exhibit displays some of the best examples of Stickley's furniture as well as a full room installation (originally for a 1908 exhibition) and quite a few light fixtures, textiles, prints, and architectural drawings, giving you a full picture of what Stickley was trying to do for the American home beyond just making heavy oak furniture.

Stickley, along with Elbert Hubbard, was something of a visionary guided very much by William Morris and other nineteenth century English thinkers who were reacting against the dehumanizing effect of industrialization and cheap commercial mass culture. They looked back to the middle ages for inspiration and a reaction against what they felt was a devaluation of the traditional culture, art, design, and handicrafts of their day. Now, 100 years later, their designs look fresh and exciting. They possess a grandeur and solidity not found in any big box furniture store. The honesty and simplicity of the materials and construction, meant at the time as a reaction against cheap mass production, looks even more impressive today. It felt nice and peaceful in that museum exhibit; thankfully they just let the furniture, lighting, artwork, and drawings speak for themselves without any video game style "interactive" bells, lights, or whistles. Walking through the exhibit hall you got a good feeling of what people like Stickley or the Roycrofters were trying to achieve, the pieces they were trying to pull together, the vision they had of an environment where one could be at ease and comfortable. It is a vision of enduring substance, as this style has enjoyed quite a renaissance in furniture, architecture, and design. In a twist of irony, many big box stores stock cheap particleboard "mission"-style furniture. While it's not quite what its originators intended, at least they are being paid the backhanded compliment that their designs and motifs are still relevant after 100 years.

Don't get the impression that my passion for hardcore has been supplanted by one for antique furniture, metalware, and architecture. I have been diligent and persistent and now have most of the hardcore records I feel are worth having—and many more that are questionable besides. I don't go to quite as many shows as I used too or buy quite as many new records as I once did, as I'm often let down. That said, I still get really excited when I find what I'm looking for. Most punks as they get older seem to branch out; they get into artier, more progressive, or more traditional forms of music. Some "dig up the roots" and go back to folk or blues. Some get into the artistic progressive structures of jazz or experimental music. I have indeed gained a greater appreciation for all kinds of music over years of collecting records; however, when it comes to punk I find myself more and more only interested in some of the simplest, crudest, and most direct expressions of the genre. Raw hardcore in the early Dischord style, Swedish and Finnish raw punk, snotty '77 punk, raw blasting crust core, and the like. The more things stray from the purity of punk, the more they can get diluted. I have long ago grown weary of any kind of hyphenated musical style which includes punk: "ska-punk", "funk-punk", "jazz-punk", "country-punk"... none of the above for me, thanks. Most of the time this is just an attempt to create marketing hype around a substandard product anyway.

As I get older I find much of the ritual associated with the punk show has grown less interesting, even tedious. The smoking, drinking, dancing, roughhousing, flirting, showing off, being cool, playing 45 minute sets so the headliner only gets to play for 15 minutes, and so on, command less of my interest than they did when I was in the age group that abounds at these shows. I'm not complaining; a show organized and attended by 40-year-old punks would probably be comparatively boring. Punk's driving force is youth, and I'm constantly relieved that successive generations have been inspired like I was and consistently start new bands, find new show spaces, and re-invent the local scene every few years just when it seems like things are dying off. There is a crop of new bands in Minneapolis; it's too soon to make a new scene report, but hopefully some of these bands will build on their foundations and create some records and live gigs that will put this town back on the map. After watching some local bands at a recent gig, a wise scenester next to me commented that it was "refreshing" and that "things are turning around." After a few years' lull it's always exciting to hear this kind of talk. Scenes have a habit of waxing and waning. Nothing ever dies out everywhere, although I do feel like things were at a very low ebb indeed in the late '80s and early '90s. There was always some scene somewhere that was happening, and soon many others to follow. People are drawn to the energy of a vital and exciting scene. It's an energy that's hard to duplicate, but it comes across strong when you listen to records even decades after the fact, especially a regional comp like *Flex Your Head* or *This is Boston, Not L.A.* You can feel the energy between the songs on those records, like something was really going on, the right factors aligned to make a once in a lifetime set of bands, spaces, events. I'm sure someone somewhere is saying the same thing about Paris in '68 or the Zurich Dada exhibition. I've talked a bit in recent columns about how I feel some of these dynamics develop, the concentration of talent, competition and cooperation between bands and labels. But let's not forget the sense of enthusiasm or energy in the air, the desire to be a part of something. I felt that in the waning years of DC hardcore as a teenager, and a bit in the heyday of Minneapolis crust in the '90s. It would be overly optimistic of me to say Minneapolis is on the verge of that kind of energy level again, but perhaps for some of the people to whom the scene is still new and exciting and full of possibilities it is. I'm not one to judge that, but for sure something really great is happening somewhere, even if things are dead in your town. The ability of punk to continually reinvent and reenergize itself with a continuous inflow of young enthusiastic people makes this possible. So instead of bemoaning the turnover in the scene every few years, we should celebrate this strength that constantly injects new blood into what would otherwise be a stagnant corpse.



"Lefty" Hooligan • What's Left?

The international economic meltdown of 2007 that resulted in the Great Recession we're still living through has been characterized by state funded bailouts for banks and other financial institutions, and considerable hardship for most of the rest of us. When the French government recently decided to raise the retirement age from 60 to 62, workers struck and youth rioted for weeks on end as French public opinion remained firmly against the government's actions. By contrast, while the American government does next to nothing to prevent escalating home foreclosures and ongoing high unemployment, workers and youth, inner cities and campuses are utterly pacified, while the American public remains thoroughly passive.

That is, unless one counts the growing Tea Party movement. Explicitly anti-big government, the Tea Party folks would give corporate capitalism free reign with tax cuts, deregulation, and privatization. So, what's up with this country that, just as capitalism is proving itself bankrupt, the only apparent form of popular resistance turns out to be pro-capitalist? That the Tea Party movement had such a major impact on the recent midterm elections doesn't speak well of the American electorate's intelligence.

(I'm reminded of a couple of editorial cartoons, the first one by Joel Pett from the *Lexington Herald-Leader* in which the character is subject to ongoing capitalist abuse. A corporation lays him off, a corporation takes his home, corporate cash corrupts democracy, a corporation denies his medical claims, and corporations track his every move via surveillance, wiretaps, internet monitoring, and urine drug testing. In the last panel, he exclaims: "I hate the #@!% government!" Another political cartoon, by David Horsey from the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, contrasts European and American reactions to government austerity

measures. In the first panel, rioting French students battle the gendarmerie. For protesting government austerity in America, the illustration is of a Goldman-Sachs executive grabbing another man by his tie and yelling: "Save my tax cut, Senator! I don't want to give up any of my million dollar bonus!")

Why there's such a dearth of class consciousness and class conflict in the United States at present, despite the ample material conditions that should generate the contrary, we'll get to in a moment. That a spontaneous uprising of the working class, or the masses, or the people, or the multitude, or whatever, isn't in the cards any time soon should be obvious in any case. The pious faiths of anarchism and left communism are less than useless when dealing with this unerring propensity of ordinary Americans today to act against their economic interests and class loyalties. The "American way of life" remains the greatest threat to the future of humanity and the survival of the planet with, perhaps, with the exception of a billion and half Chinese trying to emulate America. But at least the class war is alive and well in China, as sites like http://chinastrikes.crowdmap.com/ amply demonstrate.

Lately, I've wondered what it would take to bring a little class war back to the American scene. Perhaps a charismatic, Huey Long type demagogue could stir up a populist, quasi-socialist, share-the-wealth movement among the American people. Then at the right moment this demagogue would be assassinated—an event that, instead of suppressing the movement led by him, would instigate a mass uprising that begins a resurgence of American socialism.

This scenario is a far cry from what is required to transform the working class from a class in itself to a class for itself, let alone a successful revolution that brings about the self-emancipation of the working class. Am I going so far as to deny the self-activity and self-organization of working people? No, but lately, I've come to understand how such sentiments for class autonomy come about. You see, for the longest time, I assumed that such impulses were innate to workers by virtue of them being a social class. That, up until the 1950s, the US labor movement was often the most violent and energetic in the world according to folks as diverse as Eric Foner, Howard Zinn, Staughton Lynd, and Jeremy Brecher, I attributed to the advanced nature of the American working class. Thus, I ignored that socialism never really took root in this country in any substantive way, that a labor party never emerged to challenge the two-party electoral system, and that factors like the western frontier, race and affluence easily deflected class struggle despite its supposed intensity.

When I did pay attention to such constraints on the class war in the United States, I thought that a little more historical development would be required to overcome any such limitations and obstacles. After all, weren't immigrants invariably at the forefront of America's class struggles, immigrants from places around the world with greater historical depth? Then I realized that the planet is not likely to survive the five hundred or so years of war, invasion, conquest, economic and social upheaval, etc., etc. that will be required to give this country the historical perspective for a halfway decent class war. Which then leaves me with John Brunner's "The Sheep Look Up." Published in 1972 when the United States represented approximately 6% of the world's population consuming over 50% of the world's resources, Brunner's science fiction novel describes a planet on the brink of ecological collapse in which the only solution offered to humanity is the total destruction of America. The book concludes with this country descending into civil war.

Quite a grim little mood I'm in.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligentsia@mac.com.

Punk Rules Part 2

You likely read my column last issue—this is the second half.

5. Your band name cannot be: a pun, a play on words, funny, cute, another band's song (at least not on purpose), or the name of an action movie, actor, or anyone that isn't in your band, a word that contains the letter "z" instead of an "s"; be a reference to drinking, a made up word that's supposed to sound like an existing word, a homonym, a pisstake on an old band's name (ZZ Fop, Creedence Clearwater Retarded), bad, cheesy, stupid. Almost all bands with bad names suck, and the ones that don't, I've never heard (except for Kim Phuc).

6. Look cool. Punk (and, arguably, rock and roll in general) has, since its inception, been about looking sharp. This isn't to say that you should dress in Seditionary Sex Pistols gear; that bullshit hasn't aged well at all. You'd have to look in the most out-of-touch nooks of most Western countries to find a sane adult that could be shocked by a tight white t-shirt with "DESTROY" emblazoned across the breast. In this modern age, really the only thing a young punk (the only kind) can do is try to look as cool as possible, so when they're done with all that punk shit and moved onto a career at State Farm they can show their buddies the photos and limit the jeering. With that in mind, here are some handy sub-rules in regards to dress: Never wear more than one pin on a leather jacket (it's better if it's a big pin). Two pins are acceptable if you're wearing a plain sweatshirt, though you're better off with no pins at all on anything that's not a jacket. The only time three pins is acceptable is on a denim jacket, but even then, put them in the space above the breast pocket and below the shoulder, arranged tastefully. They should be different sizes. Never wear four pins or more. Patches are unacceptable in any form. Too-big leather jackets make the wearer appear childlike.

Pants, that's up to you, but skin-tight "punk fashion" pants are going to cause you quite a lot of embarrassment when you show your kids your teenage pictures in 2043. Not only that, but those Tiger of London brand jeans and their assorted rip-offs are prohibitively expensive to anyone who doesn't live with their parents, and who wants to wear a pair of pants that say "Stretch F#$*#N' JEANS"? Never wear shorts, especially with boots and a leather jacket. Always wear socks. Slacks are acceptable, if they fit well, and obviously pleats are completely out of the question, and not just for punks. Never wear a suit jacket unless you're wearing a tucked in shirt that matches it. In fact, if you wear a button-up shirt, always tuck it on. No work shirts. Sleeveless shirts are only acceptable in two instances: if the wearer is wildly obese or has terrible skin. Anyone else looks like a chump. Always wear a belt. If you wear biker or engineer boots, good, but no bandanas. Those were a mistake. Don't pierce yourself. I cannot take anyone with a septum piercing seriously at all, and anything beyond or weirder than that I can't even look at without laughing. Think hard about your tattoos, and make sure they're tough-looking; a snake coming out of a skull's eye socket holding a dagger in its mouth, or the like.

Don't ever spike your hair unless you're going to look really, really cool. No Mohawks, unless you're a "crasher crusty" or you don't live in America/England. Nothing "cute" (i.e. pink tights for girls). Nothing with a printed skull on it. No belt buckles. No checkers. If you wear punk bracelets, make sure you're under 22, or that you look really cool, and even so, that's only acceptable in Portland and in New York. This should go for everyone: don't carry a backpack with you unless you are going to school or work. I always wonder about the people who carry book bags around with them everywhere. What do you have in there? Your sweatshirt? A water bottle? A copy of fuckin' *Razorcake*? Leave it at home. Wear sunglasses, black Ray-Bans or the equivalent/aviators. Crusties can only wear aviators. Flannels are the new hoodies, in that they're boring looking. I hate to say it, but hats are unacceptable under almost any circumstances. Wide-brimmed hats are anachronistic, and baseball caps are for baseball games. Beanies are only all right to wear if it's cold out. Wash your clothes. Wash your face. Girls: garish clown makeup is OK if you want to look like the floozy that screws the little kid in *This is England*. Here's a note to all you fat crust schlubs: you look like a moron when you're dressed poor on purpose and pull out a 200-dollar cell phone to look up some tofu hellhole on Yelp. An associate of mine was once asked for change by a "traveler punk" (see #2) who was at the same time looking up directions to Golden Gate Park on his iPhone. I

may be forgetting some things, but this should give you a general idea of what's OK and not OK.

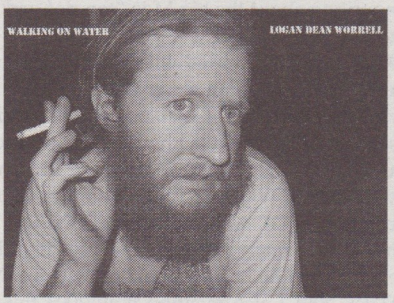
8. Don't be an idiot. The other night, a very drunk leather-jacketed girl was stumbling around my living room asking questions about all the records on the table and the various ephemera that festoons my apartment. Her gaze fell on the bookcase, which contains an ample collection of all types of books that won't fit in my room. She laughed, a horrible dead-vapid guffaw that shook my spine, then turned to me and breathed, "What're all these books for? Do you go to college?" I nearly fainted. She seemed to take my collapsing as a sign to launch into a long diatribe about how the only book she'd ever read of her own volition was the Darby Crash biography *Lexicon Devil*. I gagged and left. Of course I don't expect every punk to be some erudite scholar, ready to hold discourse on the wit and merit of *The Canterbury Tales* at the drop of a pyramid-stud, but it wouldn't hurt to read *Cannery Row* or *Journey to the End of Night* instead of watching *The Decline of Western Civilization Part One* for the hundredth time.

8. Part of being cool (and punk) is fighting, but you gotta get beat up sometimes so you can maintain your status as the "underdog".

9. Don't be a nerd. The internet, I believe, has caused great damage to the current generation of rockers, and has created intrinsic problems in punk that will no doubt increase in their horror for rockers yet unborn. Message boards are awful, a product of the nineties that should've died with politics. These internet-nerd sites have sparked real-life fights, and they cause people who should never meet to meet constantly, countless creeps spending countless hours verbally sparring, pale white fingers tapping away misspelled misinformed ripostes long into the night. How can you be a punk and spend all day on the internet? I don't understand and I hate it completely, but that's a reality for some pathetic simps out there. Also don't give me that "all punks are nerds" bullshit anymore. I've had weird creeps feeding me that crap since I was twelve, and all along I knew it was wrong; punk, to me, is about smoking cigarettes, breaking car windows, finger blasting, stealing records from record stores, pissing on shit, living in the city, riding the bus, hitting people with chains when they thought you were just gonna run, all that shit. It's not about whatever the fuck "Last.fm" is.

10. There's basic logic in booking and playing shows, and that logic is: play only once a month, twice if absolutely necessary, never play for more than 25 minutes (in fact, try for less) no matter your spot on the bill, don't talk between songs unless you're tuning, don't ask "does anyone know any jokes?" Don't ask why people aren't "moshing," don't ask for people to "come up front!" (They're not doing those things because your band is horrible). Don't act like a dick or a whiney brat, always play every show as well as possible, be in tune, don't ever act nervous, look people in the eye—especially girls, move around and act cool. If you're a singer, don't do that annoying bit where you get in the crowd's face. I can't stress this enough: look and be cool, those are the most important ideas. Booking shows? There's a thousand rules, but here's the most important: only book three-band shows, four bands maximum. I'm serious; no one wants to see five fucking bands. Neither does anyone ever, ever, want to see a fest that doesn't have shit like the Cro Mags playing. In fact, I'm gonna go ahead and say that just leave that whole fest business alone, Hefner's got it handled, you can't do a better job so why try? I'm serious; nothing is more boring that sitting around while fifteen shitty bands play. Give it up.

Anyways, there's really a lot more than this, but my fingers are tired and I can't keep spitting em out. All this should be commonsense, but look around you: crustlords, "Pyrate Punx", mysterious guys, all wrong and horrible and twisted. If you break or have broken any of the rules listed this month or last, give me and the world a break and off yourself immediately. See you in the funny papers, you pricks.



"I can't take the pressures, the pressures of life. I'm not strong enough and I'm sorry. Alcohol." – "Relief ", DOOM.

Booze and me got a serious love /hate relationship. Every couple years it's on the hate side of things, but as of late drinking has been going pretty well. Been chilling pretty hard—power-chilling actually—and not being so pissed/negative all the time. This does, however, cause my family and me a great deal of concern—seeing as my track record with the occasional consumption of adult beverages isn't the best. Let's take a look and weigh out the pros and cons.

My story is the same old song and dance: Daddy was a drunk, blah blah blah, broken promises, crushed dreams, etc. Nothing special. Momma was (and is) a saint. Not an excuse to be a fuck-up, but hey, why not at least mention it to give a little perspective? Started drinking way too early. Never really learned how to drink like an "adult". Binge drinking, not unlike frat boys. I lived in a small town, with nothing to do but get into trouble. Honestly, it was fun. Huffing Freon, stealing cars. Not a bad little life for a thirteen-year-old. But all good things must come to an end, and when I was fifteen I caught my first case. Not worth going into the details, but my parents had to go into their retirement money to pay for a lawyer and ended up on paper till I was eighteen. It wouldn't be fair to say that alcohol and drugs were the problem, but the absence of 'em would have probably deterred me from being such a dumb fuck. Either way, shit was starting to cause a lot more problems.

Rehab.

Didn't have fancy insurance, so the state-funded route was the most viable. Rough scene for sure. Due to our former governor's (BUSH) budget cuts in the late '90s, a lot of juvenile facilities had been shut down, and we were forced to make do with fewer staff, and shitty hospitals. Basically, I ended up in a sanatorium. Half the place was for mental health issues, and the other half for chemical dependency. I was put somewhere in the middle. Just a simple detox—thirty days of hell. No fresh air, bed checks every fifteen minutes or so, and hospital food. My roommate was in there waiting to go to a big boy state hospital for mental illness. Needless to say I didn't get a whole lot of sleep that month. Every night you'd wake up to screaming from a few rooms down. My roommate somehow slept like a champ. Fucking weirdo.

The showerheads only came up to about your torso in the hopes that it would be too difficult to hang yourself from. It was a quaint little touch. The month wasn't a total waste: I learned a lot of new slang and got really good at ping-pong. The rehab center was set up kinda strangely. There were two dorms set up across from each other separated by a big courtyard. Basically the guys and girls could see into each other's rooms, which, in my opinion, was a well-devised plan to trap a bunch of horny teenagers. There was this girl named Paige, and yes, she was fine. It was like some *Girl, Interrupted* shit. She was nuttier then squirrel shit, but everyone in the joint was between the ages of thirteen and seventeen and could be hard pressed to give a flying fuck if homegirl was a cutter or not. Like I said, girl was fine.

One night while getting ready for bed I randomly looked out my window and there she was—Paige. Looking right back at me. She was in a pair of boxers and an old shirt, presumably doing the same thing I was doing. Then all of a sudden I got smacked upside the head with the most amazing sight a young delinquent in a state-funded rehab could ask for: she showed me her boobs. It was like being touched on the dick by God himself. I was frozen with excitement. My jaw was on the ground and the Big Red Machine was standing at attention. Seconds after the boobs blew my mind a staff member walked in. "Lights out." I knew that I had about fifteen minutes, give or take, to make shit get real loose. I went for it. Sure enough, Paige's window was still lit up. Shit got real cool. Some more boobs, then some other things. Paige made the gesture that she was interested in seeing mine and frankly who was I to deny such a thing. I obliged and then it was really on. We stood there and fucked ourselves in front of each other for a couple minutes and eventually went to bed. It was a great night. In the morning at breakfast we were told that Paige had left. Apparently she was being inappropriate or some shit like that and they sent her off to State. Of course another one of my rehab buddies told me a story about how last night he had gotten a strip tease from Paige that went pretty much exactly how mine did. Then another guy told me about his experience with Paige: same meat, different gravy. What I gather now is that Paige was looking across a courtyard at a row of windows, filled with about

fifteen teenage dudes jacking off. Fuck.

Post-Rehab.

By the time I got out, daddy was sober and he and I were going to AA together. That place was the worst. Not AA as a whole, just this particular group. White trash for days: ex-prison Nazis, meth heads, con artists. Sober, yes, but you can take a drunken horse thief and get 'im sober and you still got a horse thief. It can do a lot of good for a lot of people—my father for one—but it wasn't for me. I was a kid and needed some friends. Given the line up of freaks, this didn't seem like the place to make some new buddies. Regardless, it got me sober for a good number of years.

I didn't touch a drop till I was 23. Then came a trip to Europe. Whoa. That was fun. I just partied all the time. Wasn't such an uptight weirdo, and made a lot of new homies. Why not keep this up when I get back to the States? Sure thing. Not my best idea. Like clockwork, I got into some more trouble, spent a bunch more money getting myself out of it, and all around fucked up my life by the time I was 25.

I cooled out for a bit. Got some perspective on some things. Learned how to be sober again. I'm still unsure whether or not I was an alcoholic, or if it was just that I fucking sucked at drinking. I figured that part of my life was gone forever and I was gonna have to just live free and clear of that junk. Well, fuck that. Another trip to Europe and another try at partying. So far, so good.

Now I'm drinking somewhat regularly. Not like I used to by any means, but still a little weird about it. On the bright side of things, all the bartenders in Austin are stoked I'm back in the game and are buying me loads of drinks. Frankly, drinking is a lot cheaper than I remember. Plus, if you just stay away from the cocaine it's not that bad. I guarantee you that, within a year or so, I'll be fucking up again—maybe for the worse this time. People say I'm not so much a mean drunk, just a dumbass, and I can respect that. No one wants to be that old drunk dude at the gig puking in the corner, but no one wants to face reality either. Drinking makes ugly people attractive (including myself) and boring people more interesting. 2011 is shaping up to be a wild one. Re-reading this I realized that I kinda got all Brace all over everybody. Sorry about that.

***

Send bullshit to ldworrell@gmail.com

It all started in 2006, I was about to play a show and went to the bar with a friend who right before I took a shot (she was having wine), said very casually and seemingly out of nowhere "You know I dont think my parents ever really loved me" She let it spew not whine-ly not even confessionally, really just as matter of factly as you could think to imagine. I really became taken with the idea of just saying what the underlying theme of your unhappiness/discontent/thing you cant change *is*, so you learn to just kinda deal OUTRIGHT. I begin to say, calmly in conversation "I was molested." It was right about that time I got that Headcoats *Every Bit of Me* 7 inch and it made me see Billy Childish in this new kind of way because I don't really know any other dude that's addressed it in a punk song. I used my new "telling how it is" approach to let off some steam. But then of course every one got freaked out. As we all know, people are fragile but I hardly saw this as a reason for everyone to get *soooooo* uncomfortable when I talked about being molested. It *never* fails. All joking aside about this very grim and dark (and common and human) social matter I have my reasons for feeling the way I feel and I'll share (even though i probably shouldn't—a friend warned me that even writing about the big M is "too riot-grrl"—fuck it).

Ahemmm it all started with me being a total asshole. I was at some show and got into this playful (but sorta *not*-if that makes *any* fucking sense) back and forth with three other dudes about being "PC." It started 'cause one kid ironically (i.e. ANNOYINGLY AS FUCK) kept calling everything "GAY" and I asked him what was up with that, (but really just asking—I mostly didn't give a fuck *and* he had an ironic mullet—i.e. NO FUTURE. Did I also mention how 2003 this all felt?) and then it turned into this thing where the other guys chimed in and they started to push my boundaries around the "F" word. YOU WANNA PUSH BUTTONS BITCHES?!?!?!? LET'S DO IT! I looked at the loudest one—cute skinny young thing, big ole dick sitting like so much moose knuckle in his girlfriends H+M jeans and with ill intent said, "You dress like you were molested" they went silent for a second and to clear the air I made the mistake of saying "WHAT?!?!?! I was molested-fuck it I was a reallllly hot kid!" They hated that one too. The kid made some closing remarks (we were all buzzed) and I got on my bike and left but didn't feel like anything *super* fucked up had happened. But then the next day I saw Mullet at the show and he was like "Dude, that kid really was molested" and I was like "DUH" but then I started to feel slightly dick-ish. But only slightly. A.) He started it and B.) I was still processing it, 'cause not thinking about stuff is something I have trouble doing.

Again I don't know what the disconnect was with me and the boys. Near as I could tell (with no fear of pulling of the "gay/queer card") I have always noticed that many of the queers I know have a different dialogue about molestation. Some of us even joke about it but also I think it really depends on what happened. I was molested by a family friend who was maybe just older enough to know better. It was that part of the '80s before daycare was common and I grew up with a cluster of kids in a rural place and was not always under the scope of a lot of adult supervision. It was not cool but terribly common. I had a ex who grew up in the house with a family member molesting him. I think him talking about his deal made me not trip on mine so much. Though he claims not to trip about his shit either we still could come to the agreement that being molested *had to have* in some small part somewhere be the reason we both liked being controlled sexually. Very pedestrian and very text book but *goddamn* if I don't believe that there's a bit of truth too it. Being in an environment where you can constantly talk about it in this way makes it not as heavy an issue to deal with cause you get the thing I think all survivors need—a certain normality to this thing so you don't feel like a freak and where only you know your pain. I feel like a lot of dudes in general don't really talk about being molested and hearing it being talked about in this really brazen way I think really triggered that guy and I wanted to apologize to him. There was the total hateful bitch side of me that wanted to also remind him that you shouldn't be in the practice of starting shit you cant finish and shit talking with shit talkers will surely end in a draw but in the end I got too much love to let that happen but *then* mullet was like "Don't worry he was blacked out and doesn't remember any of it." So I said fuck it.

Ba(n)d Breakups

I've been witness recently to some bitter band breakups, the kind you think are an awful shame. Besides the bogusness of seeing an awesome band implode, it's a major bummer to see formerly good friends part ways. While talking to every side of a split, you can find yourself privy to the miscommunication that led to the demise of the unit, and the incorrect assumptions and accusations all parties have directed at one another.

A new band can be a glorious thing. You're making music you're excited about, working with friends you care for and suddenly have an outlet to use all kinds of ideas you've been storing up forever. Shows are played and your peers are reacting to what you're doing; the new music may be amateurish, but it's real and heartfelt and you can see some of your ideas are beginning to take shape. Your band is a part of you, your touches are on the music—it is partially your input that makes it what it is. The belonging someone can feel in the underground and among punks is strengthened even further when a project like a band is undertaken. When you feel someone else in the band is suddenly undermining what you're trying to achieve, defensiveness and sensitivity are natural reactions—you've been struck where it really counts, a place where you've been caught wearing your heart on your sleeve, and you feel betrayed.

When a band of like-minded punk rock kids self-destructs, the split-up culprits are ultimately personality and politics, but I think there are three main values that divide us: art, integrity, and ambition. Integrity versus ambition would be a more common struggle among punk band personnel. Sometimes, Billy Bandmember and Rachael Bandmember clash over playing shows with certain bands of an upwardly mobile clique that don't jive with their DIY background. Billy doesn't like the bands but also doesn't give a shit. He just wants to play to anyone, anywhere, anytime. Rachael feels like associating with these bands in any way simultaneously supports the crap bands and insults her own. This leads to Billy thinking of Rachael as unsupportive and uncommitted to the band. Rachael, meanwhile, is beginning to think that all of the talk Billy makes of wanting to spread the band's music really masks a desire to be big. Of course, whoever may be right. Billy may actually just want to be good—his desire is that when the band's obituary is written, it states that they were unquestionably good. Rachael's commitment to the band meanwhile may be stronger than Billy's, but she's simply unwilling to waver on her ethical stance. Her desire is that when the band's obit is written or spoken on the lips of their peers it is noted that they never compromised. But assumptions are made and ill feelings multiply. Smaller disagreements become larger, implosion follows, and bad blood reigns.

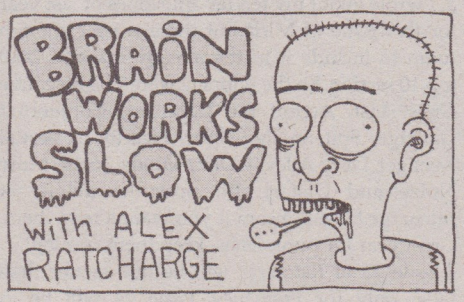
Art is another fragile matter. Let's say Susan, Billy, and Rachael may begin the band heavily influenced by the Avengers. Suddenly, Susan (no pun) is writing riffs that show how much she's been listening to the Cramps. Billy is jobless, living on food stamps, has started blazing up some weed on a regular basis, bought some chimes for his drum set, and wants to cover ten minute songs like "We Will Fall" by the Stooges. Rachael has started working 50 to 60 hours a week at her job and wants to play something much more aggressive to blow off some steam. All parties are baffled by their comrades' new offerings. While recording the band's EP, Billy and Susan want to add some effects like reverb, multi-track guitars, and layered vocals on the chorus of the A-side. Rachael wants to keep everything on the record totally raw and as unmolested as possible. Susan argues that the record will survive longer than the band and its members, so therefore all possible tools to make it sound as good as it can should be employed. Rachael feels like the manipulation of what they've done in real life is a disservice to the band and the record. These situations, like the ones typified in the paragraph above, are going to need compromise and communication.

People are weird and punks are even stranger. Communicating with one another can be as odd. A band I was in once took to the road and realized we coped with being with each other constantly by communicating with fellow members in a very sarcastic, passive-aggressive way. It was a way to keep things funny and light while also letting one another know what we were kind of annoyed with. This was good for tour. We found a groove and stayed with it; it stopped things from building and exploding or becoming awkward. Rarely did anyone get genuinely pissed at anyone within the band for several tours and years. However, when it came time to talk about what some of us felt was the band's necessary demise, we were totally unprepared to speak directly with one another without feeling strange, so our communication totally broke down. I learned a lesson.

Simply telling someone where you are coming from and what's important to you can make all the difference. You can't always agree, but you can trust each other and give and receive the benefit of the doubt for each other's sake. You still may need to part ways, but without bitterness or a reduction of respect for one another. Bands come and go and so do friendships—but often, fucking up the latter over the former is not worth it.

ENDNOTES:

1. Carl Panzram 31614 should have the 10" out by the time this prints or very soon thereafter. Tour to follow and a 7" single recorded at the same time as the 10" as well.
2. Send me a demo, mix, music video, letter: John Fahy/15011 Lakeside View Dr./Apt. 2402/Fort Myers/FL/USA or use: fahy_john@hotmail.com.
3. Ruling the turntables: NATURAL LAW (7"), CHIN CHIN, TEAM DRESCH (second LP, track four), SHOPPERS (tape two), MERCHANDISE (new singles and demos).
4. More video documentation of punk happenings must be my new year's resolution.



The other day I watched the movie *Kaboom* and I learned a new English word: asstard. Seriously? A combination of "ass" and "retard", two of my favorite English words? I checked Urban Dictionary—it says an asstard is "a retarded person whose head can be found protruding from their rectum. Example: *You like Creed, you're an asstard.*" Fuck, what a great language English is! From now on I'm gonna make sure to use that beautiful word in my columns as much as I can.

But wait, how rude am I? I just realized it's already the fifth column I write for *MRR* and I haven't even introduced myself yet. So this month: my life, my problems, by Alex Simon.

As you may have noticed, my English is kinda weird: that's not because I like Creed, but because I learned English by watching *The Simpsons*, trying to decipher the liner notes to 25 Ta Life CDs, and reading columns in *MRR*. Yeah, you guessed it, I am not from the USA, neither am I from the UK, Australia, or, god forbid, New Zealand. I was born in the country of freedom fries, baguettes, and hip-hop, a country where we think of Americans as dumb fat idiots, where we refuse to speak English even when we go on holidays in London, a country where 90% of the punk scene is happily on the dole and as a result doesn't have enough energy or anger to play hardcore punk so we just play melodic garage rock with songs about sex and food, a country most foreigners think of as full of arrogant trendy skinny assholes—you guessed it, I can't help it, I'm from France.

So why the fuck am I writing columns for an American magazine? This is as big a mystery to me as it is to you. The other day I was reading the columns in a recent issue of *MRR* and I realized that everyone else is using fancy words I would never think of like "tearjerker", "accountability", or "thriftstore", and I started to panic—since every other columnist was born speaking English, I really need to outdo myself and write as well as I can to not come across like a complete asstard! I asked my friend Luc (who's like a million years old and has been doing punk zines since he was twelve) if there had ever been another non-native English speaking columnist in the pages of this fine magazine, to which he replied, "No, my son, not that I can think of. In fact, you've been given a great responsibility: to improve the image of French and European punks in Amerikkka. If you fail, you will be banned from every single German ex-squat, every Spanish d-beat band will start singing songs about bombs falling on your apartment, every Polish crustie will start throwing their bottle of vodka at you, and the French government is gonna start a national campaign to make a scapegoat out of you, the one and only responsible for the deplorable image of Frenchies in McDonald's Land." Damn. It kinda freaked me out, but I decided to do it anyway and to never forget the reason why I have agreed to do so. Mom can be proud, indeed: after years of telling me to get a job and stop dedicating my time to writing about stupid punk bands in my own photocopied magazine that will never earn me any money, I've finally made it. I've got a steady job writing for a world famous American magazine that's paying me with a subscription that will last for as long as I can write (or at least until they kick me out), which means I'm getting the equivalent of $60 per year including postage. Not too bad for 50 minutes of work every month. I made it, Mom! Now will you please stop telling all your friends I'm a useless, lazy freak? Thanks.

There's not much more you need to know about me really, but if you're still reading I'll assume you're bored enough and already read every single ad and demo review in this issue so I'll go on. My dad is a nuclear engineer (yeah, just like Homer Simpson), and I grew up in the suburbs of Paris, in a pink house surrounded by other pink houses that looked and smelled the exact same, in a neighborhood designed after the nightmare that is American suburbia. Dad was traveling a lot at the time and he looked the fuck up to the USA—he thought their social and economical system was better, or something equally outrageous. As I was growing up he kept telling me about American blue jeans, American hamburgers, and American movies, so I quickly lost

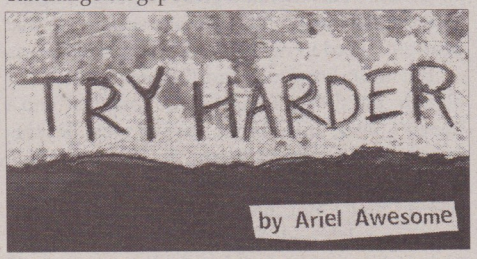
interest in anything French and started looking up to American punk bands on Epitaph Records. I'm vaguely trying to be funny here but this is actually kind of sad; that shit is happening everywhere and the punk scene is no exception. Instead of learning about their own countries' rich cultures and histories, kids just want to know about the descendants of Elvis and Marilyn, and sometimes I'm pissed off at myself for being a part of that. In France a lot of punk bands sing in English—bad, broken English. If you ask them why, they'll give you incredibly stunning answers like "It feels more natural" or "This is the language of rock 'n' roll". More natural? How can anything feel more natural than singing in your mother language? The language of rock 'n' roll? I thought the language of rock 'n' roll was the language of nerve and attitude, heart and soul. Most French bands that sing in English have the most pathetic lyrics—they either don't make sense at all or are just so cliché it truly is embarrassing. Some people also say they're scared to sing in French, because it would make it way easier for the audience to understand the lyrics and they couldn't hide behind their bad pronunciation of a foreign language anymore. Sounds good to me. Can you imagine growing up listening to Minor Threat and not understanding that the dude doesn't want to feel guilty of being white, not know what it is he doesn't wanna hear, not understanding who's full of shit for calling what religion? That's what a lot of punks do all over the world. I played in a bunch of bands with bad English lyrics in the past and, oddly enough, it's when I was living in New Zealand that I started singing in French, which my bandmates encouraged me for (as a side note, Kiwis are the best). When I came back to France I decided I was never ever gonna sing in English again. Now I can't even imagine doing something as absurd as singing in the language of Hollywood movies to an audience who doesn't have a clue what I am yelling about. The band I play in these days has lyrics about depression and life sucking the shit out of my brain and I really enjoy the fact that, when we play these songs, people know that we mean every single word we sing. And there's no turning back, thankfully.

Look, language is so very, very important. Language isn't just words—it defines the way we think about the world, which in turns defines the way we behave. I once read an article stating how many languages and dialects die each and every year. I don't remember the exact numbers, but believe me, it was some scary shit. There are many parts of the world where people struggle to keep their language alive: Basque Country, Scotland, and the Bretagne region in France are the first examples that come to my mind but there are countless others, and that shit deserves to be supported, if only with words. From what I understand there are more and more bands singing in Spanish in North America today, and I think that's amazing; because I don't live there it's hard to tell if it's just some kind of trend but I sure hope it isn't, I hope things stay that way until it's not even surprising anymore. It's pretty inspiring to realize that back in the '80s there weren't many US punk bands singing in Spanish, and that this shit has changed, which I imagine is at least partly due to the hard work of some people (Los Crudos, I'm looking at you). I love English. It is one of the two only languages I can speak and fully understand. Being able to speak it taught me a lot and helped me in a lot of situations, but I also know that Spanish-speaking people in the US have it rough, and it's fucking amazing to see that people are reclaiming their language and their culture, and saying "fuck you" to the homogenization of the thought process of this shitty world.

I'm not a patriot by any means, and when I'm done shitting on the US flag I'll start puking on the French one, but it took me a while to appreciate and understand the importance of bands singing in French, or in any language that is not English for that matter. If you're in need of some good French-speaking punk rock new and old, you can start by checking out Les Calamités, Camera Silens, Stalag, Lexomyl, Télécommande, Taulard, Périphérique Est, Toujours Rien, Edith Nylon, Métal Urbain, Bière Sociale, Nocif, Franz Kulture & Les Kramés, Mopo Mogo, and tons more. And if you live in a country where English isn't the national language, learn from Spanish punks—don't be an asstard, never sing in English.

Endnotes:

1. This column is dedicated to Vincent La Muñeca.
2. The Clash said it better: "I'm so bored with the USA".
3. I wrote about my ten favorite zines of last year for this issue of MRR but there wasn't enough room to include it in the already massive 2010 top 10 section. So the winners were The Negative Guest List, Accept the Darkness, Counterfeit Garbage, Spit on the Major, Heartbeat, Bestial Avenger, Dirty Alleys/ Dirty Minds, Nuts!, More Noize and Distort. I'll post the details at ratcharge.blogspot.com if you wanna read them. Great year for punk zines, keep them coming! .
4. Issue 23 of *Ratcharge* will be out sooner than later, only for Frenchies. Issue 24 will be in English and should be out in the coming months, featuring Hygiene, Crazy Spirit, Black Time, Las Señoras, Solo Para Punks Discos, Counterfeit Garbage, and Kitchen's Floor, as well as reprints of my first batch of *MRR* columns and the drawings and comics I did so far for Brisbane, Australia's *The Negative Guest List*. Ratcharge.blogspot.com for more info.



In blue marker on a yellow legal pad I wrote my very first story. When my mother woke up a few hours later on that Saturday afternoon, I handed it to her expecting my heartbreaking work of tragedy would reduce her to tears.

I don't know where I stole the plot from or what made me so intent on writing it. That is lost, but the details of the story I remember well for some reason. It was about two gazelles, brothers. They bickered all morning about which plants they like best to eat, a rather silly argument that they allowed to heat up in the afternoon sun. They weren't on speaking terms when the lion attacked. The young brother, the one most insistent about fighting over the sweet grasses, is about to be clawed to the ground when his older brother limps provocatively near the lioness. She takes the easy prey. The young brother escapes with his life, and deep regret.

When my mother finished she told me it was very cute and that I was very clever. I didn't say anything, but I felt the heat flushing my face. She handed the story back to me with a tired smile and went into her room to get ready for work. I sat there on the wooden stool in the kitchen, my little eyebrows knit together and a tiny frown tugging down on my face. I examined my story closely, pulling hard on one of my braids in concentration.

I asked myself again and again, where had I gone wrong? I thought I had all the elements. Family bonds, sacrifice, tragedy, action… so where were her tears? What was cute about death on the savannah? I wanted my mother to see the tragedy of the gazelle's sacrifice, and yet the necessity of the lion, the violence that is the basis of life. Instead she saw an upcoming graveyard shift at the hospital, a sink full of dishes, and her precocious daughter seeking approval.

I folded my little story up and stuffed it into the pocket of my pink overalls. I didn't want to throw it away, but I didn't want anyone else to tell me it was cute either.

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When I was fifteen I started putting out a zine with some girls at my high school. Late at night we snuck into the real estate office where our friend's mom worked to drain the toner out of the copiers and leave coffee spills in weird places—like little punk gremlins. We wrote reviews, rants, and even some funny attempts at journalism. We suffered from the faults of all first-time zine makers. We wrote for each other and about each other but were surprised when other people didn't get it. It was full of in-jokes, and weird, incomprehensible references. But it was fun to make, fun to play at writing for an audience. It was fun for a while anyway.

Some older guys in a band that I had called "okay, if you are into shit like that" (when actually they were fucking terrible by all possible standards) pulled up to the bus stop I was waiting at and threw garbage. They called me every bad name they could think of and some they made up on the spot. I'm pretty I remember the word "bitchface" making an appearance in their tirade. As they screeched away down the street I screamed, "That wasn't even a bad review, assholes!"

Not feeling understood seemed like a permanent fixture of my life by this time. What I wanted people to get from me and what they got were rarely the same thing. I had resigned myself to this and figured my inability to get my point on

the page wasn't something that was worth working at. And after getting such a wild and forceful reaction to such a bland statement, I wondered how anyone ever communicated successfully at all.

I put out a few more zines here and there, but more for the fun of putting them together than anything. The thing that got me to grapple with writing, to learn to string words together in a way that makes sense to you and me, is the zine you are holding right now. The responsibility of writing for a magazine I care about and representing a collective of people I respect lit a monstrous fire under my ass. At first I was daunted by the fact that more people would read my writing than ever had before, but as deadlines bore down on me I got it done. Month by month, as deadlines whooshed past, it got a little bit clearer, the words came easier. As Gertrude Stein said, "to write is to write is to write is to write." So I wrote. I learned how.

These last five years, writing reviews and then this column, I learned how to write clearly enough so that a stranger could understand, and yet pretend no one would ever read it. Yes, dear reader, I'm afraid most of the time you are a figment of my imagination that I try very hard to pretend doesn't exist. So I don't worry that you'll hand me back what I've written and tell me it's cute. So I don't worry you'll pelt me with garbage at the bus stop. That way I can tell you anything. That way I can write from a real place, from that secret place. So that you and I both get the writing we deserve.

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2011 is the year print has its revenge. Really it is, go ahead and Google it. It's about time too. It's been like six or seven years since I spent hours at the copier getting whiteout on the glass and stapling my fingers.

Please send all ideas for what to call my new zine to arielawesome@gmail.com, and while you are at it why don't you just go ahead and write a zine too?

ALL FOREIGN JUNK

The new year. So many dreams to quash, so much hope to vanquish still. 2011: go ahead.

This summer—for readers in the northern hemisphere this is your winter—the UV RACE will have been on the festival circuit in Australia, and will be able to watch IGGY & THE STOOGES kick it out with outta-retirement-investment-broker guitarist James Williamson and *Funhouse* saxophonist Steve Mackay. I've seen them play a couple of times since dusting off the war medals, and it's been one heavy hit and one mortifying miss. Here's hoping that the rumor mill chugging that praises Williamson's work is working in my favor and I can have one red hot summer before school is back and I have to go hang out with some dead Krauts. In any case, we get to watch old people and feel superior because we have our vitality and functional erectile tissue, a performance as old as the STOOGES themselves, and think about Ron and his narc stage presence. R.I.P.

But... the STOOGES ain't worth your AFJ coinage! Let's talk about some people who probably can't even speak English!

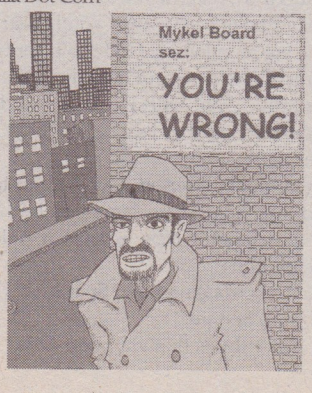
Digging through recently acquired records and fanzines to blubber about in this column left me holding onto a handful of chaff and a couple of glorious stalks of golden wheat, one of which is the starkly presented and harshly delivered GLAM single. This Spanish hardcore band delves into the Italian filth and fury of the early 1980s, and with a couple nods to their noble countrymen from INVASION and DESTINO FINAL in the production, they have released a modern hardcore record with sufficient raw power to let it stand on the faces of everyone else struggling to make this sound work. And stomp down, again, again and again. Six times! My speakers are sweating from the work, my neighbors cannot procreate, the economy is on the verge of collapse. Released on the glorious La Vida es un Mus label and keeping with the standards established from a couple of years of assiduous label management, to the point where you can say "I trust you, sir, to do right by me each time you call the pressing plant."

I think the word I am looking for is *bueno*.

Here's the lowdown on the second stalk of wheat: it's that most difficult of format, a split record. In this case it's an LP, and it's between two Serbian hardcore bands: JAIBO and LETS GROW, both bands providing evidence that ANNIHILATION TIME conquered the continent. Neither band is in painful debt to A.T., but obviously see in them the same potentials that Copenhagen's NIGHT FEVER have. BL'AST affection, nods to hard rock, loud guitar. For all those miserly creeps in umpire uniforms sweating over the boards, I will let it slip that it's the LETS GROW side that I have consistently favored, but because the sound is pretty consistent across both sides, and because Serbian hardcore in 2010 made very little impact on my world, it is the first split LP I have given a shit about in a long time. I think the word I am looking for here is: Serbian for good.

That's it for this month. Several impediments have arisen to problematize my attempt to procure new records and provide detailed invective for the benefit of *MRR* readers, but let me say quickly that the WIRE *1976 Demo* LP, the INSERVIBLES application of demo cassette to vinyl, and the LOVE TRIANGLE 7" would all have got a considerable rap by me here if I wasn't also currently attempting to read the entire four-volume set of Heidegger's lectures on Nietzsche for school and Voltaire's *Candide* for kicks. Lesson: don't read or write and you'll probably enjoy records more.

If you *don't* live in the US, Japan or Sweden, you are part of the master race and can contact me: A Foreign Junkie at PO Box 239 North Carlton Victoria 3054 Australia Dot Com



"Corruption is nature's way of restoring our faith in democracy."

—Peter Ustinov

I was gonna use this column to chronologically follow the last with my further adventures in Mexico. But despite my jock itch and whooping cough, I decided to hold off. I have bigger fish to fry.

Sometimes, events change the way you think. An epiphany, the Christians call it. A flash of insight that makes you realize something you've never considered before. Take *corruption*. I used to think it was bad.

Here are three stories:

Guaymas: (Northern Mexicans don't like to pronounce G's when they start words. So the town is pronounced *Why Mas*? I say, *Why not*?) I wasn't exactly in the middle of this adventure, but heard about it from Gilberto, who was. Here's **Story One**.

It's late. Sometime after the big punkrock show. There are weird laws in Mexico, as there are everywhere. Here, you're allowed to drink in the bar, but not in the attached music hall. After 10, you can drink anywhere. But, you can only buy beer retail until 9PM. After that you can only drink in a bar... until 10, when you can also drink in a music hall.

We'd just driven fifteen or so hours to get to this town. From Tijuana. By now, beers are needed by all. While the early bands played, those of us not playing run back and forth from the bar to the band area. *Sin Arte*, the Mexican version of Artless, had to cancel. Ivan, the bass player, was evicted from his Arizona apartment earlier today, and had to move to Tuscon. It was gonna be our first show. Sad.

Some of us went out to stock up on booze before the stores closed. We hear there are a couple illegal places that sell after hours, but only Gilberto has the details.

I drink while Cojoba plays. Despite 38 seconds of sleep the night before, they play a good show. Also playing is one of my favorite bands in the world, VERBAL DESECRATION. I've probably already said it, but I'll say it again. Alan Jr., the singer, is one of the best performers in punk rock today. I could watch him all year.

Gilberto, who had driven the whole way, is enjoying beer number I can't count. I'm still racing back and forth from bar to stage, gulping from a can of Tecate in the bar and then racing back to see the bands. Gilberto disappears to buy some of that illegal late nite booze.

When he returns, here's what he tells me:

He's driving along the streets of Guaymas... no idea where he's going... completely sloshed... with a truck full of illegally bought beer. He's careening that pick-up truck right and left across the streets of the town, which is pretty much shut up for the night.

Sure enough: *AAAARRR RAAAAARRRR WOOOOWOOOOWOOOOWOOO.*

Flashing red and blue lights in the rear-view mirror. Uh oh. The cop gets out, flashlight in hand. He's not a big guy, slightly chubby, a bit haggard looking. I'll translate the conversation for the gringos.

Cop: You know why I stopped you?

Gilberto: I...uh... I... who? Where am I?

Cop: I think you were maybe having something to drink? And you maybe were buying it after hours?

Gilberto: I... uh... huh?

Cop: You know, I've had a long night. Just give me money for a cup of coffee and then get out of here.

Gilberto hands him 20 pesos (about $1.80). The cop shakes his head, gets back in the cop car and takes off. Somehow Gilberto finds his way back to the club.

Story 2. We've just been to a beach near Guaymas. Only Ray actually went in the water. The rest of us just took our shoes off and played with the scorpions in the sand. We were with Sabo, aka *The Buddha of Guaymas*. He's a really fat guy whose nicknames for everyone catch on immediately. Ray is *Michael Jordon*. I'm *Pinche Viejo Marihuano*, (loosely translated: Fuckin' Old Stoner).

The waitress at a seaside restaurant is *Verijas Lilas* (Purple Snatch). On our only free day, Sabo takes us on a tour of the area. He has his own pick-up truck. Moe and Ray ride inside, the rest of us in back.

What a glorious trip! Riding in the back of a pick-up... six people, among the cactus and desert... Mountains and sea... Downing can after can of Tecate... Wow! Do I feel Mexican! Here's a toast to Mexico and Mexicans! We all raise our cans to the passing cars. It's a steep road from the beach to the highway. It takes careful maneuvering, quiet, sober, thoughtful.

Then there's us.

Slap! Sabo hits the curb. We back up. *Baaloo Baaloo*! Some one leans on a horn behind us. We toast him too. We're off. Down hill. Seems like we're going pretty fast. Do the breaks work? *Screeee*!

BLAM! We're all thrown to the back of the truck. I manage to grab a kind of lead pipe that keeps me from being flung over the edge. I guess the breaks *do* work.

BLAM, we hit the curb on the other side.

Careening through the street, toasting every cute chiquita and necktied businessman. *Salud! Salud!* (I try *Potato Salud!* but nobody gets it.) We all grab more beers. I don't know how they do it, but Mexicans have developed an *endless sixpack*, similar to the *bottomless cup of coffee* at IHOP. You take a beer out of the cardboard and there are still six beers left. It's magic! The beer just keeps coming.

Uh oh, we're suddenly in a land of strip malls: McDonalds, Walmart, everything except Taco Bell. Did we cross the border and not know it? We park in a parking lot. Sabo and Moe go into The Generic Giant Supermarket to do some shopping. The rest of us wait in the lot, sitting in the back of the truck, continuing to exploit the endless sixpack. A car pulls up next to us. It's a black and white car, with lights on top. Uh oh.

Three cops get out. Two short ones, about my height. One taller with heavy jowls and a bad complexion.

Although Taina and Javier both speak perfect Spanish, they are Puerto Rican and their accents would stand out like a hard-on in church. Gilberto, our only *real* Mexican, gets out of the truck to talk to the cops. He speaks to the big one. I translate.

Gilberto: Hello. Is there a problem?

Cop: You know there is a problem. You were all drinking. Where's the driver?

Gilberto: He went inside with a friend. They're going to buy groceries.

Cop: We can take you all to jail. If anyone is drinking in a car or drinking in public we have the right to take you to jail.

Gilberto: Come on. I'm Mexican. I know you can't do that.

Cop: Okay, you're right. But we can make trouble. We can wait for the driver and take *him* to jail.

Gilberto: I understand. How's a hundred pesos (about $9)?

The cop nods.

Gilberto hands him the money. The cops go on their way. And the party continues.

Story 3: ***Agua Prieta*** is a dusty Mexican town just across the border from Douglas Arizona... a dusty American town. It's where Gilberto's aunt and uncle live and it's now one of my favorite places in the world. According to Gilberto, it's controlled by the drug cartels. All the fancy restaurants, bars and clubs in town are owned by them. Gilberto's uncle owns the best "non-drug cartel" restaurant in town. You'll probably read more about this amazing city in future columns. It's filled with colorful characters, a great strip club, and the world's only Burger Queen.

Right now, I need to introduce you to one of the colorful characters: Barichu. He's a tall handsome guy in his mid-20s. He wears a black leather jacket, is talkative, and notorious in this small town. His picture was on the front page of the local newspaper... under the headline: **POSSESSED BY DRUGS? OR BY SATAN?** The story tells how he started yelling at the police. As they surrounded him, he pulled out a plastic gun and shouted BANG! BANG! at them. In America he'd be dead. In Mexico, he got beat up and thrown in jail for awhile. Every cop in town knows the guy. He often suffers from black eyes and bloody noses.

One of the many other reasons I like him is he said to me "Mykel, tu eres una leyenda aquí." A third reason is that he's known as "Sonora's GG Allin." (Sonora is the Mexican state where this column takes place.) One of his more notorious tricks was to pound dried dogshit into a powder... and snort it.

So it's the middle of the night. We've been at the strip club (boy, *that's* a story), finished a couple buckets of beer, seen... well you'll hear later. Right now we're piled in Gilberto's rent-a-car. He's driving. There's me and Barichu in the back. Gilberto is in the front with Paige, a girl visiting from Boston, and another local guy whose name I can't remember.

The town looks deserted. Good thing too, as we're skidding across the street, from side to side, like a stripper's hips against a pole. Up ahead is a red light.

"Go! Go!" shouts Barichu in Spanish. "There's no one around. Just go."

"Er... I don't think that's a good idea," I say. "Cops don't sleep at night. They may be looking for..."

Gilberto steps on the gas, ending me mid-sentence. FOOOOOOT. Right through the red light. And the next red light. And the next. Although it's physically impossible to drive both on the right and the left sides of the street simultaneously, Gilberto does it. I cover my eyes.

I do not cover my ears, however, and so hear the police sirens coming from behind us. I knew it.

We stop. Pull over. Lights flash in the rearview mirror. Gilberto gets out of the car.

Jeezus: drunk driving, running three lights, speeding. It'll probably cost us $20 to get out of this one. Then Barichu gets out of the car, yelling at the cops.

There's more shouting. Lots of Spanish words I don't know. What sounds like boots stomping in mud. Suddenly a cop gets into the driver's seat of our car, the place vacated by Gilberto. He wears no hat, but he does wear a turtleneck sweater. Pulled up high, the turtle neck covers most of his face. Everything except the eyes. He looks like a giant uncircumcised penis... the glans just peeking through, above the foreskin. With three of us in the car, he starts it and drives... somewhere.

"You're taking us home?" asks Paige.

Wishful thinking.

Without a word to us, the cop pulls over... somewhere. It's even more deserted than the already deserted center of town. He gets out of the car. A few seconds later, Gilberto gets in the car and kneels on the front seat.

"Barichu pissed them off. We got to get a thousand pesos together or we go to jail," he says.

Barichu gets in the back seat. The rest of us pull out our wallets. I've got 300. The guy whose name I forget kicks in a couple hundred. Gilberto puts in what he has. Paige has no pesos, but throws in about forty U.S. dollars. Barichu yells at all of us. He has no money.

Gilberto counts what we give him. Twice. "I think we got it." he says. "Let's hope so."

Barichu yells at him.

Outside, there is more talking. Barichu gets out of the car again. Uh oh, this is gonna do it. I'm gonna spend the night getting buttfucked by the Frito Bandito. But no. They got their money. They let us go.

Barichu and Gilberto get back in the car. Barichu says he wants to move to Boston where Gilberto lives because the cops here always beat him up. I tell him that in Boston, they'd kill him. He doesn't believe me.

On the trip back to Gilberto's uncle's house, I think about corruption. Three times. In the U.S., each would've landed us in the slammer. We'd have to spend days in court, probably get licenses taken away, have a criminal record, spend thousands on fines and lawyers fees, and what do the cops get for their work? Bubkas.

In Mexico, we're stopped by the cops three times. All for legitimate reasons. It costs us a total of around $100 to get off. Every cent of that goes into a hard-working cops' pocket. We have no criminal records (at least not here in Mexico). No

time in jail. *That* is corruption. And contrary to what I've long thought, I now say: **VIVA LA CORRUPCIÓN!**

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or website viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get live links and a chance to comment on the column]

—>*And they call it welfare dept:* Former candidate for NY Governor, Carl Paladino, said he'd transform some NY prisons into dormitories for welfare recipients. "Instead of handing out the welfare checks, we'll teach people how to earn their check," he said. "We'll teach them personal hygiene."

—>*I wonder if it teaches them personal hygiene dept:* Democracy Now! reports that an LA country jail plans to use prisoners as test subjects for a U.S. military high-tech ray gun that cause extreme pain. Seeing as they're only prisoners, it doesn't really matter, does it?

—>*Where rights are privileges dept: New Republic* editor, Martin Peretz, said he wonders if Muslims "are worthy of the privileges of the First Amendment which I have the sense that they will abuse." He also wrote "Muslim life is cheap, most notably to Muslims."

Seems to me that by writing that Peretz is abusing *his* first amendment rights.

—>*But **he's** not cheap dept:* David H. Brooks, the CEO of DHB, a body-armor company contracted to the US government, has, according to the *NY Times*, used company money to pay for pornographic videos for his son, plastic surgery for his wife, prostitutes for his employees, and a $100,000 American-flag belt buckle encrusted with rubies, sapphires and diamonds.

—>*Who's abusing the first amendment? dept: Bryan* Fischer of the *American Family Association* said that the US should have "no more mosques, period." Why? "Each Islamic mosque is dedicated to the overthrow of the American government."

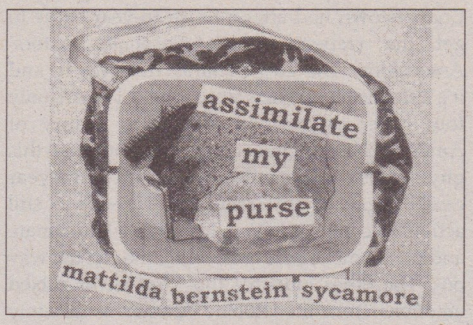
—>*Today's friend, tomorrow's prisoner(ask Noriega)dept:* Jailed Afghan drug lord, Jama Khan, has been a CIA informant for years, *The New York Times* reports. He was paid large sums of money to provide information about the Taliban, Afghan government corruption and other drug traffickers. In 2008, Khan, described as the most dangerous drug lord and Taliban supporter, was arrested and transported to New York to face charges under a new American narco-terrorism law.

—>*Letter reply dept:* Last month Naomi wrote a thoughtful letter about how there seemed to be a conflict between my complaining about child tobacco labor in Kazakhstan and my opposition to kiddie porn laws in the U.S. She said that since most children don't "consent" to be in porn and that they aren't paid for it, kiddie porn is slavery. Since I believe the letters column should be for readers, I didn't answer there. Here is my answer:

The reality of child porn is that most of it was made decades ago and is still being distributed. (By the way, the number one distributor of kiddie porn is the U.S. government... for entrapment purposes). There's no way of knowing if the kids consented or not. In the stuff that I've seen in Europe and Asia, the kids look pretty happy... like they're playing.

In any case, most of the images of children (family pictures, street snapshots etc)... in fact most images these days... are distributed without the consent of the person photographed. That's life without privacy in the 21st century.

Of course, I oppose people forced into doing things against their will, but I'd say a fuck of a lot more adults are forced into working jobs they hate than children are forced into doing something sexual for others to take pictures of. Capitalism is slavery. Most of us are slaves.



Rearranging

Not too long ago I didn't want anything in my life that wasn't created by me or the people I'd chosen around me. When I went back to visit my father before he died, I realized oh, these stuffed animals I had as a kid, they make me feel light and joyful, sad too but also bright and filled with possibility. So I took them with me, or asked my mother to send them, and she eventually did. My high school yearbook and literary magazine too—I was the editor of the yearbook and coeditor of the literary magazine, but I'm not sure I wanted either near me before then. Also, some of the seashells I used to arrange in the bathrooms of the house where I grew up, a clay bird I bought in Mexico as a teenager, a glass panda from a relative I only remember seeing once.

Before then, I asked my grandmother to send me some of her collages—I'd always loved her art, but wasn't sure whether it would just make me sad to look at it on my walls, trapped. Sad that she could make this beautiful work, but refused to try to understand mine. Trapped by childhood when everything was a trap. But actually the art made me happy, I could stare at it and just imagine, kind of like a kid I guess, which is maybe what I like about all of this.

Now I have so much more—all these things I've accumulated from my grandmother's house—tons of her art now—a few oil paintings, lots of collages and several handmade paper works, even a few sculptures she made at one point. Lots of the minerals she used to display around her house, the minerals that inspired her in her artwork, she would study the patterns and color combinations. Now I do. I even have her metal tic-tac-toe set, colored plastic blocks, small tables she collaged, dishes from her kitchen, drinking glasses, silverware, towels. All of these things are beautiful and inspiring, or at least practical, but they also make me feel a bit self-conscious, like where did I get all this? With the art I wanted to make sure that I had pieces from as many periods of her work as possible, I value her work in this way, the history, and mostly these are small pieces, the larger ones are in the University of Maryland collection or in storage near my mother's house or sold for nothing by my mother at auction. Sometimes I actually want more of this work, just to preserve it. This feels important to me, but also in my self-conscious moments I wonder what people think about these things arranged in my apartment, beautiful things that relate to me but came from someone else. What does that mean about me, about my history, about my sense of vision and beauty?

I arrange these things, and rearrange them, trying to find the perfect place for everything. Like my grandmother, I guess. Although she would never hang art on a purple or pink or green wall, only neutrals she believed. She would never put several pieces right next to one another, contrasting in the way that I love. But now I have all these things—artwork from a few of her friends too, and from a student of hers too, photos of my father from high school, the list he made of all his bar mitzvah presents. This stuff about my father, or from my father, that I keep away from direct view, but I'm sure I'll want to look at it at some point—for a different reason, nothing about my father feels comforting, just jarring. Sometimes jarring is important too.

I wonder about this space I'm creating with all my grandmother's things around, this space that I already love and I'm sure she would see my apartment as cluttered, even now when it's barely arranged. She would never arrange contrasting thrift store sofas or chairs together at one table, or laminate photos or propaganda and put them all together on one wall, my art, and I don't know exactly what any of this means. Kind of like when I look out my window and there's some guy walking around in a tank top. It's 30 degrees out, and he's hot! I mean he is hot, but that's not the point.

Or, not like that. I'm looking out the window at details. My grandmother liked details too, sometimes she only liked details, the ones she could create on a canvas, control. If she could've arranged all of us, well then I'm certain she would have. You too, even. She hated this piece of assemblage art made by one of her students, 1967, a threatening hairbrush, bristles destroyed, facing us. Surrounded by broken machine parts, all painted hues of black and brown and gray. Early feminist art, I would say. I always loved it. My grandmother hated it, but kept it on a wall in the hallway of her basement, where I would look at it. She must've liked the student. Now that piece is here on my wall next to a silkscreened mirror art piece by a friend of mine in San Francisco, white and red images of ODYSSEY and that first space flight, James Brown behind bars, one of those vans people would drive around and live in, maybe a Gulfstream? Airstream? Something like that. Both pieces reflect that same time period, actually, and it reflects out at us from the purple wall.

I think the next piece to go up on that wall will be a black-and-white drawing by my grandmother from around that time period too, maybe earlier, a gold frame. My grandmother would never use a gold frame. I mean she framed it that way, but when? 1958 it says at the bottom. It looks great, actually, but if my grandmother were

going to put it up anytime in the last twenty or thirty years, she would've had it reframed for sure. I love the way the painted gold frame will reflect one of the images from the mirror.

My parents only trusted one person to decorate their house, and that was my grandmother. Although as a kid sometimes I was allowed to make additions, adjustments—everyone always said I had my grandmother's eye, and maybe that's what made her so resentful of me later. I mean that it wasn't her eyes I was looking through. As a kid I saw so much through her eyes, but as an adult all she gave me was judgment and betrayal, she showed me the way someone so enthralled by dreaming could still refuse to allow her grandchild, me, to dream in my own way. To challenge her dreams, which I realized still centered around upper middle-class attainment, status, respectability—all the things I hated. Especially her dreams for me—she could choose freedom, but here I was the overachiever high school student ready to outdo all of them, and she resented me so much for refusing the whole package, creating my own way outside of their norms. What does this mean, then, to display her creations in my house, what does this mean for our relationship? What does this mean for me, and my relationship to the world? I'm asking these big questions because I'm asking these big questions.

But when I feel self-conscious maybe that's part of it—that upper middle-class attainment that I learned as a child meant an interior death, a legacy of abuse, a propensity to hide it, to hide everything except that veneer of success and keep moving, keep moving up. So I wonder if, when I'm hanging this art I'm participating in that illusion. I do have a certain kind of stability now that I haven't had before, financial stability, because of my grandmother's death and what she left to me. How do I make sure that kind of stability doesn't lead to the violence I grew up with, the violence my grandmother could never leave, even as she arranged and rearranged her beautiful art? In my own arranging, what more can I rearrange?

I recently moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico—how crazy is that? And, guess what? AK Press will be publishing my new anthology, *Why Are Faggots So Afraid of Faggots?* in 2012, so get ready for thirty flamers to deliver the goods. My most recent book is a novel, *So Many Ways to Sleep Badly*, and now I'm on draft ten of a memoir called *The End of San Francisco*. You can communicate with me via www.mattildabernsteinsycamore.com, which includes past *MRR* columns, although I need to add the most recent ones. Or you can write to me at P.O. Box 2151, Santa Fe, NM 87504.

MIND LESS CONTENTMENT
WITH CHUCK BARRELS

Hey now! It's been awhile since I last rapped at ya, I know. I think I missed a deadline or something last month, but you know, there wasn't shit to write about in the record world anyway. The new releases get to be slim pickings around the winter holidays and such. But now we definitely have some exciting stuff to catch up on: 2011 Baseball Hall of Fame inductees have been announced!

Firstly, let's give a big round of applause to Mr. Bert Blyleven, who finally got the Cooperstown nod after a fourteen-year battle to get the respect of the Baseball Writers' Association. The guy certainly deserves it, and it's a shame he had to wait so long… I mean, only four other pitchers in the entire history of American baseball have more strikeouts than this guy, whose curveball-laden twenty-two-year career began when Harmon Killebrew was still active! So congrats to you, Mr. Frying Dutchman, and please make sure to tip Bill James on the way out. The other inductee this year elicits mixed emotions from me. Robbie Alomar is certainly the best second baseman of his era and possibly of all time, and he did play many seasons for my beloved tribe, even if he will be enshrined as a Blue Jay. However, even during those years when he was wearing the Chief Wahoo cap, I could never fully embrace the guy. Cocky, arrogant… sure, those are qualities that are sometimes beneficial, even necessary, for a star athlete. But when combined with the famous spitting incident and his "extracurricular" activities involving his then-girlfriend and a certain communicable disease, you have to question the guy's character. And what is baseball really about if not character? His numbers don't lie, offensively or defensively. I will give him that. He deserves to be in the Hall. But to me, he'll always be one of those guys who were full of talent yet short on class, the type of player I can never get fully behind no matter how much I want to. Craig Biggio might not have been as skilled, but he was in another league when it came to embodying the true spirit of America's Pastime when compared to Robbie. I'd also like to give the BBWAA a big shout-out for knocking Mark McGwire down the ballot a few more notches and for also giving that prick Raffy Palmeiro an embarrassing eleven percent of the vote. Fuck, he'll probably blame his poor showing on Miguel Tejada. If there's anyone who doesn't deserve the Hall in my mind it's this lying prick. What, he's got 500 homers and 3,000 hits? How can a guy with those Aaron-esque numbers not be a shoo-in? Well get this: baseball's all-time hits leader ain't in Cooperstown either, in case you forgot. So suck on that.

While we're on the topic of class and character I'm of course reminded of Australia and its many bands that personify all that is good about rock'n'roll, as much as your Blylevens and Biggios do for baseball. EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING, UV RACE, DEAD FARMERS, OOGA BOOGAS, CHINESE BURNS, and more, all classy as fuck. And let's add another to the list, a band that have made one of the few records I've been excited about these past couple months, and one that's jostled its way on to the "Best of 2010" list right at the finish line. I'm talking about STRAIGHT ARROWS and their debut LP that goes by the name of *It's Happening*. The band is a lively quartet of three young men and a woman, and this record takes me back to a time when garage rock was still true and undiluted and bands were more concerned with just creating fun and reckless music instead of worrying about finding a label to release a 7" of the shitty demos they recorded last week with their four-track. I haven't heard a record this wonderfully inspired by the *Back from the Grave* series since the BLACK LIPS were still writing songs that mattered. Brimming with reverb, moxie, and hooks galore, they've done a remarkable thing in creating a full length without a single duff cut. All hits, I shit you not. And they can hit from both sides of the plate as well, playing it upbeat, poppy, and bright just as well as they swing with a great garage-punk snarl, remembering to put the p-u-n-k in the mix. Just a great attitude across the board, in particular when they delve into darker psychedelic territory. The lo-fi recording job on this is spectacular, wringing extra charisma from already impeccably crafted tunes and never obscuring the invigorating energy this thing is packed with from start to finish. Few records of recent vintage have made me this pleased. Fuck, I even caught Hippie Johnny spinning this thing for a zong session the other day. An essential record for any self-respecting garage turkey paying attention to today's music scene. This might be tough get imported from Down Under, but I urge you to spare no expense to acquire this platter. (Juvenile Records, myspace.com/juvenilerecords)

Speaking of character(s), Cleveland is certainly full of them. A city with the richest rock'n'roll history in the world, Clevo has spawned more legendary bands than most other states and countries as a whole. One of these legendary outfits were called H100S, and they existed for a spell during the '90s that made quite an impact no matter how brief it may have been. To prove their might, a live LP that seems to just be titled *Live in Cleveland April 2nd 1995* has been released that documents these he-men bantering with a crowd full of INTEGRITY and ONE LIFE CREW fans and even playing a few songs in between the talking parts. Prototypically meaty and destructive hardcore for the time that showed they were more than a few steps ahead of the bands they shared a bill with on this night, even if they didn't receive the same acclaim and acceptance at the time. Total fucking rippers, these guys. Wedge, Chard, Tony, and Chris Erba went on to (and previously did) play in other equally powerful bands that you should already know of, so I'm not going to get into the family tree here, but together as H100S they were certainly something special, and this live recording has the superior sound quality to prove it. All their hits, and even their shits, this is yet another entry into the long, long list of mandatory documents of the life's blood of rock'n'roll that pumps out of the heart that is Cleveland, OH. Limited to 500 copies, you better get come and get some soon. (NonCommercial and SYG Records, www.citys-laang.com/syg)

You know, it's funny that I'm trying to shoehorn this whole class/character thing as a segue for various records and bands in this column, because it's actually turning out to be true... Connecticut might not have the biggest scene in the country, but ESTROGEN HIGHS might have some of the biggest hearts. One of "those" bands that keep their scene alive and kicking by sheer force of will and hard work: establishing venues, running labels, bringing in out-of-town bands, being in a jillion other bands... unstoppable energy and positive attitude without being self-righteous or cocky. Just doing it for the love of the game. These fine young gentleman have just self-released the tellingly titled *Friends and Relatives*, their sophomore LP, and it's a further extension of their already admirable and unassuming workmanlike aesthetic. These fellas aren't all about singeing your eyebrows with velocity and doubling you over with sludge and scuzz; they're about crafting a really personable and subliminally catchy batch of no-frills and low-fidelity garage rock. Understated is a word that I've often used to describe them in the past, and I just used it there again. Deceptively hooky and almost quietly rocking, this LP is full of soulful introspection and songs that feel more alive in their subdued tempos than any 100mph punk band does. No showing off here, just a talented group of kids going out there every day, doing their job and mowing them down. Paste-on sleeves give it a little extra homestyle flair. Future Hall of Famers, these youngsters. (Gramery Records, grameryrecords@gmail.com)

From future Hall of Famers we move on to the wily veterans, and if there's a fella who should be ensconced in the garage punk Hall of Fame, it's Bart Hart over at Big Neck Records. Bart's helmed his squad with class and generosity through two decades and continues to be a great skipper with a taste for the rawest and loudest in the game. His two latest hits are the second LP from Detroit's RED RED RED, *New Action*, featuring Ryan from PIRANHAS/DRUID PERFUME fame. He's switched the line-up from the band that crafted their blazing debut LP from a few years back and slowed the approach a little bit here, but he's effectively substituted volume and power without missing a beat. There's a lot of raw guitar blaze and sharp angles to the songs which have elements of CLONE DEFECTS punk and HUMAN EYE weirdness in equal measures. Great sax bleats on a bunch of tracks as well. This is one of the few bands that skillfully blur the line between garage punk and hardcore punk through sheer force of guitar riffs and ugly feedback scree. RED RED RED is one of the most underrated acts to emanate from the always-busy Detroit scene; you need to hear this and their debut (also on Big Neck) if you haven't already. Bart being an old school guy, he stays loyal to his bands and players to the end. Proving this, he's released the long-awaited *Bloodeagle* from Seattle's TRACTOR SEX FATALITY, even though they've been broken-up for some time and have been posthumously assembling this recording for what seems like ages. Even though it's CD-only (ack), you gotta have it. I think it might be their best release of all, perhaps even topping the deadly *Black Magic, White Pussy* LP from back in the day. The only band who can swipe from SCRATCH ACID, GOBLIN, BUTTHOLE SURFERS, and perhaps even the dearly departed CAPTAIN BEEFHEART and make something that makes total rock'n'roll sense out of the mess. Sludge-fuck drug-pummel. Lysergic splatter rock. These guys were playing it heavy and fuzzy before a lot of new jacks made it hip. Fuck tha police and get a grip on this mofo. (Big Neck Records, www.bigneckrecords.com)

Speaking of badass mofos, Scott Soriano over at S-S Records is one of the baddest. Despite being from the same generation as Sparky Anderson, he's managed to keep his finger on the pulse of what the current crop of kids want from their punk rock today. Often plundering the European leagues for unexpectedly stunning smash hits (see the BANQUE ALLEMANDE LP) and/or bringing blasts from the past into the present (OZZIE or even the A-FRAMES *333* comp), this skipper will go to any lengths to bolster his roster. He's once again dipped into days of yore and unearthed a simply wonderful compilation LP called *FM-BX Society Tape 001*. Yes, you genius, it's taken from a cassette released in 1981 out of Belgium featuring some of the finest DIY punk you've never heard from three unknown (until now) bands. ISOLATION WARD offer of up a couple of tracks of bleak post-punk melded with '80s-style synth-wave. They're good and all, but these other two bands are absolutely *great*. UNIT 4 were an all-female Belgian squad who played charmingly sloppy and slightly inept punk rock indebted to KLEENEX, DELTA 5, and PETTICOATS, and are surprisingly great at what they do. I'm not usually a fan of the girlie-punk, but this stuff transcends gender and genre. Fantastic. But to me the real highlight here are Scotland's TOPPLERS, whose songs are absolutely incredible DIY punk in the vein of TELEVISION PERSONALITIES, PREFECTS, the TIMES, and other UK greats. So good that I'm hoping old Scott can find some more unreleased gems from these gentlemen. Frantic and poppy, and very "British"-sounding in the best way. The LP packaging wonderfully replicates the art from the original tape and it's selling for the nice price directly from the man. Essential for anyone who thinks they know their *Messthetics* comps. (S-S Records, www.s-srecords.com)

Back to the present day here for one last full-length whammer-jammer worth chatting about, then I'm wrapping this disaster of a column up. Olympia, WA has been home to some of the wimpiest music of all time; I don't think anyone will dispute that. It's not a bad thing, it's just a fact. But the winds seem to be changing up there with the recent crop of bands on Perennial Records (who have nothing to do with SEX/VID, so stop it already) such as WHITE BOSS, HPP, SON SKULL, GUN OUTFIT, and three young ballplayers who call themselves MILK MUSIC. They've just released their debut "long player" (six songs and about twenty-five minutes, which is actually the proper length for a true punk LP) and it's something quite unique sounding. Firstly, if you love great guitar sounds, just fucking sign up for this thing now, because this guy wrings some loud and thick smog out of whatever kind of gear it is that he's owning the shit out of. Musically, it's direct-drive rock that's borderline grunge, but don't let that word scare ya. Think DINOSAUR JR. if Mascis played more like Greg Sage (or even Greg Ginn) than Neil Young. Every song is a well-constructed anthem packed with emotive riffing and creative soloing. Melancholic loser-core jams that have an angsty, controlled rage to them and a sort of burnout druggy haze of smoke in the background. Simply put, one of the most interesting and original rock records I heard in 2010. Don't pose. Grow your hair long and buy this record ASAP. (Milk Music, milk_music@hotmail.com)

>*In the Red Records dept.*: The In the Red label finished the year at least four or five LPs over .500, easily. A true dynasty of a label. They capped the year in supreme fashion with TYVEK'S *Nothing Fits*, which will most likely win the MVP (and which I'm still raving about to anyone who will listen) and released at least a half-dozen other Golden Glove candidates throughout 2010. Resting up for 2011, skipper Larry Hardy bolstered their line-up by signing Aussie sluggers UV RACE for their second LP during summer talks, and he's also got new records from vets DIRTBOMBS, DAVILA 666, the SPITS, THEE OH SEES, and more on deck, plus a busy reissue schedule that could/should include CHEATER SLICKS, URINALS, HOMOSEXUALS, and CONSUMERS. All hail the king. (www.intheredrecords.com)

Cool Single dept.: New York City has a lot of shitty bands and labels living within its confines, so it pleases me greatly when two of Gotham's finest can combine their forces to make something worth a shit. Almost Ready Records, well known for the All Star compilation series >*The World's Lousy with Ideas*, has sprung back into action after a brief hiatus with the latest release from PINK REASON, who were also on a break of their own. The 7" EP is called *Desperate Living*, and it's fucking killing me right now. Showcasing the band at their most punk (and with a near-hardcore digression as well), it's three songs of grungy (yes, apparently it's back in style) downer-rock that borders on the heavy psychedelic reaches that TV GHOST or PUFFY AREOLAS revel in. No folky shitgaze here, just anthemic, depressing, and all-out rocking, it's the first must-have record of 2011 (myspace.com/almostreadyrecords)

>*Cool Tape dept.*: Yes, yes, I know there's no such thing as a cool tape. Cassettes suck. But that's not stopping people from releasing them. The best one I've heard this winter is from an Austin, TX punk rock band called WOMEN IN PRISON that features former and current members of FUNCTIONAL BLACKOUTS, THE YOUNG, and TOTAL ABUSE. They play thuggishly Australian and sneeringly snotty punk with a capital "P", and it's just what the world needs right now. Not striving to be weird, not caked in reverb, just back-to-basics degenerate rock 'n' roll that makes me proud to be an American. HozAc has already signed these Rookie of the Year candidates for their debut wax, so you know I'm not lying. (Sick

Thought Records, trekbgh@yahoo.com)
>*Cool Reissue dept.*: Well, I guess I already talked about S-S Records' dandy little DIY-punk comp up above, but that's less a reissue than it is an outright discovery. For a miles-beyond-cool reissue, let's talk about Smog Veil Records' glorious repackaging of the seminal Cleveland hardcore compilation *The New Hope* that was originally released back in 1983. Containing the best hardcore punk band you've perhaps never heard (the GUNS) along with ten other classic and largely unknown bands including the DARK, SPIKE IN VAIN, ZERO DEFEX, STARVATION ARMY, THE OFFBEATS, and more playing enough different variations of punk rock to make your head spin. All from the same city! Whatta scene! As I've stated numerous times in this column, Cleveland is Ground Zero for the best music of all time, and the tunes on this comp, now expanded to a double LP set, are certainly no exception. The extra LP contains bonus material from all the bands (including more GUNS songs, which the world will never have enough of) that is of impeccable quality, which is rare for reissues of this ilk. The bonus stuff is actually as good as the material that originally appeared on the LP, not the usual watered-down live dreck and crappy demo stuff. A total fucking package, with new liner notes/history and a reproduction of the original booklet of art/rambling from each band. If you don't own this by the time pitchers and catchers report, you are truly bush league. (www.smogveil.com)

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And that's all she wrote, sports fans. Hopefully I'll be on the ball more often this year, as we have a lot to talk about before the season gets under way. Carl Crawford to the BoSox? Adrian Beltre gets $80M? What's The Tribe up to? Should Bagwell get lumped in with cheats like Big Mac and Sosa? HOMOSTUPIDS travel out West? FOLDED SHIRT have recorded an LP? All this and more in future Mindless Contentment installments. Contact me through *MRR* if you need any tips on who to draft in your fantasy league or which LPs to buy with your Christmas money. RIP: "BULLET" BOB FELLER.

Levi's & Scion & *Vice*, Oh My: Corporate "Philanthropy" and Interest in DIY

I'd heard the phrase "corporate philanthropy" for years before I understood it on a visceral level. In 2007 "Fashion Week" was held in Milan, and a billboard featuring a naked, emaciated woman and the words "No Anorexia" was posted nearby, causing flare-ups in the debates surrounding sizeism in high-fashion, and eliciting a lot of international attention. This image is both powerful and dangerous; I was initially cynical and somewhat repulsed when I discovered that Nolita, a clothing company, had paid for it. However, Isabelle Caro, the woman featured in the ads, said that she felt she was engaging in activism by agreeing to pose for the photo.

It's easy to simplify Nolita's motive, and say that they only wanted to draw eyes to their brand in the wake of a million other identical ads, or to say that Caro's activism was diluted by her paycheck. Who knows what the real intentions are when money is involved? The point I'm getting at is that, in our politically saturated world, corporate interest is often tied to corporate philanthropy, sometimes unintentionally. Regardless of the credence you give to philanthropy as a "legit" corporate interest, and whether or not you agree with the decisions that have been made by our peers, recent big business interactions with DIY activities is clearly tied to these themes.

Levi's gives a million dollars to help development that some DIY folks are contributing to in Braddock, Pennsylvania. Everyone celebrates, but worries about gentrification and sustainability. Scion puts out the most recent Magrudergrind release. Everyone's pissed. Obviously helping to develop an impoverished town is not the same as sponsoring the arts, but these two companies are both engaging in corporate philanthropy. From their end, both of these things look the same. They're giving money to a "cause", which helps shape their company's image. Scion is a brand that is constructed around hipness and youth culture, so what better to align itself with than the arts and "edgy" DIY music? Levi's has always created itself as a servant of blue-collar America; its "Ready to Work" campaign is nothing new. By aligning themselves with reflections of these themes in society, these two companies are engaging with the fruits of what's called "coolhunting" to appear edgy in the eyes of the mainstream public, while simultaneously honing their images, and turning a buck in the process. Maybe they actually care about the causes behind their campaigns, maybe they don't. Regardless, their corporate image is their biggest and best marketing tool.

So, if we're talking about corporate philanthropy then we're talking about imagery. As far back as Malcolm McLaren and Vivienne Westwood, people not immediately involved in punk and DIY were making money off of its image. Even though their shop SEX was a "local business", it still turned profits. A tried-and-true marketing strategy is to employ subcultural style to appear "edgy". This happens with multicultural representations, as well as with queer subculture and also with punk. Everything inside the capitalist system makes money, but when you're talking gigantic corporations, that's when people start to get nervous.

It's important to remember that the Scion and Levi's campaigns are the tip of the iceberg as far as corporate philanthropy. Salad dressing is perhaps the earliest large-scale example of this (I promise this goes somewhere). In 1982, Paul Newman founded a line of salad dressing that I remember my mom using when I was a kid; he donated most of the proceeds to various charities. He went on to form the Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy in 1999, and co-wrote a memoir poignantly titled *Shameless Exploitation in Pursuit of the Common Good*. My dad once told me that when someone has that much money, they often try to use it to make their mark on the world. Modern iterations of corporate philanthropy seem to me to be a mix of altruistic motives with capitalist interest in profits, all manifesting as image-making.

Pepsi gave money to my high school when I was a kid, Dove sponsors the "Real Beauty" campaign, and unbelievably, Time Warner helps bankroll the "Girls Incorporated" media literacy program. Companies have a hand in so much of our lives; now it's legal for them to openly sponsor political candidates as well. They know that customers are more likely to buy their products if they are engaging in what is perceived to be "worthwhile" philanthropy, or "good" sponsorship. My mom still buys Paul Newman's salad dressing. At this point, we're doing ourselves a disservice if we don't acknowledge that most marketing campaigns companies embark on are political in some respect. We have to remain vigilant in this not only to become more informed consumers, but also to view our own positions in the capitalist economy more clearly.

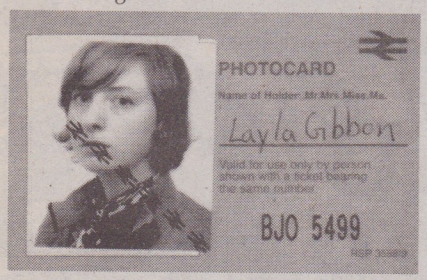
All of this begs the question of agency. The mayor of Braddock could have refused the one-million-dollar check from Levi's, and Magrudergrind could have said no to the recording session that Scion offered to pay for. In fact, any of the slew of bands that have played Scion-branded events (among them Hunx and His Punx, Pierced Arrows, Best Coast, Municipal Waste, D.R.I., Thou, Baroness, Kylesa, Neurosis, and, ironically, Integrity) can always say no, just like Isabella Caro could have turned down the opportunity to pose on that billboard. Anyone who does an interview with *Vice* magazine or plays any kind of fest with a corporate backer (like Pabst!) can say no; for anyone that does, there are many more who will say yes. Every company is owned by people you may or may not agree with, even non-profits. We all have a limited agency within the capitalist system, and it's impossible to live completely oppression-free and abstain from the system unless you move to the woods, grow your own food, and stop paying taxes. In addition, let's not forget that agency still exists in the hands of DIY participants after deals have been signed.

Really, what the decisions you make come down to is what how central DIY punk is to your life, and how dogmatic you want to be about it. Fests, labels, and bands all make money. Is it a hobby or do you have a full-time DIY job? If the latter is true, do you deny yourself all profits from it because it's antithetical to your beliefs? Westwood and McLaren paid the bills with their small business; when does a project stop being DIY? Is it really fair to crucify someone else for taking it further than you would? I don't pretend to have the answers to any of these questions, but I do believe a lot of our activities take place on spectrums.

Magrudergrind has taken a lot of heat based around DIY anxiety, and the DIY folks living in

Braddock who appear in the Levi's ads have been sort of swept under the rug. We have to remember that sponsoring "the arts" is similar to paying for a church and community center in a small town, when seen from a corporate perspective. Also, I think we value a DIY ethic in musical production more than we value it in times of economic crisis; punks are selective purists. Accepting corporate philanthropy dollars based on corporate interest in your hobby or cause's "edgy" aesthetics seems, at first glance, antithetical to DIY politics, yes. But where is the money going? The Levi's million went towards a Braddock community center, and the Magrudergrind payout was given to friends who did the DIY recording and artwork for the release. Ultimately, the corporate philanthropy goals are fulfilled in a way; the arts and the development are both furthered at a fraction of the ultimate profits to the companies, who use their donations as substantial tax write-offs. The album is available for free, just like the community center in Braddock. Magrudergrind and the DIY folks in Braddock both receive more attention for their work, and both projects move forward.

Remember when I said people get "nervous" when big business is involved? Punks (like any non-dominant group) are gripped by this fear that we'll be exploited and assimilated into mainstream society, and our DIY ethics will dissolve. This is what we term "selling out". However, I think we're doing ourselves a disservice if we operate under the illusion that there's much, if any, political coherence across DIY or punk, any "cause" that can be donated to, or any company, for that matter. Punk and DIY mean something different for everyone, and to assume everyone views it as occupying the same place or degree in our lives is a mistake. In this shitty capitalist system, we all have to negotiate our lives and beliefs in relation to giants.



Usually *MRR* has another shitworker edit and compile all the year end top tens, as it's a huge amount of work on top of the already heavy coordinator workload. This year the task ended up in my hands. And what a task! I would say we have about ten times the usual amount of lists this issue, some of the top tenners wrote over 3,000 words! I looked back at a few old year end top ten issues, and noticed that the same people had complained about what a shitty year in music it was every single year for the past five! Makes you wonder when the mythical "good" year in punk rock was.... Every year is a shitty year; we're doomed! There are also a few records that made 2009 top tens as well as 2010 top tens (some records even made the same contributors lists both years!) We tried to edit out anything that came out in say, June of 2009, from the running, but it can get confusing because of the cover date of the magazine. For example we work on the issue that says February on the cover in December. Any records that are reviewed in the February issue actually came out the year before despite the cover date. The issue you are reading right now is the March issue, but most of the records reviewed in it came into the magazine in December, so again, more year end confusion to come! We also try to only cover stuff that's reviewable in the magazine. Have you already done your year end top ten? Probably, since by the time you will be reading this it's a few months into 2011. I found mine a lot easier to do this year than usual; I guess I have an advantage being that I have to listen to every record that comes in for review in order to assign them to the various reviewers each month, but some years it's definitely been more difficult than others to pick 'em out. I think 2010 was a good year, a ton of cool fucked up girl bands and female voices, and a fine selection super raw destruction sounds from the garage, hardcore and shitpunk planets. I am also excited about some new and imminent releases from new bands and old favorites...

All of Chalk Circle's recordings will soon be available on LP courtesy of Mississippi records and PPM... In case you are interested in finding out more about what that means read the Sharon Cheslow interview in MRR #298 or reread her photobook *Banned in DC*. Chalk Circle were too arty for early '80s Dischord to put out so they just had a few random compilation tracks here and there, all of which are great. I am excited to hear any unreleased stuff. I feel like I have written about them extensively in my column throughout the years! One annoying thing recently happened as a result of my extensive girl punker history column writing. My boyfriend tried to buy me a copy of the Foams 7", awesome experimental girl punk from early '80s Texas, but the seller wouldn't let him buy it because "Layla at *MRR* really wants this. I have to find out what it's worth." Gah! It's such an obscure record that there aren't any listings on popsike or collector's frenzy I guess for anyone to gauge the price/value from. So he got it from my fuckin' column/my desire to own that record. Is it the only thing that comes up when you google it or something?? Jeez. I was told by all my kollector skum friends that this is why you keep your want list secret. However, while this was a supremely frustrating event I sort of feel like writing about weird, obscure fucked up girl punk that has been wiped from punk history is important and something I will continue to do. I would love to own that Foams record, but while I have a pretty big record collection, I am not a record collector. I am happy with a decent vinyl reissue over an expensive OG.

I am also excited by the fact that apparently there is a Neon Blud LP headed to the compound. I heard a rumor that it's not as compelling as the 7" but I refuse to believe this until I hear with my own ears. Also a split with Diet Cokeheads in the works?? I really liked both of their 7"s, seems like it's gonna be right up my street. I have also been enjoying tapes by Firebrand and the Sceptres. The Scepters feature *MRR's* own Bryony Beynon on vocals, and assorted Shitty Limits on instruments I believe. I have heard as a band they are headed to the exit door which is a bummer as this tape is as killer and sardonic and spiky / restless as their previous 7"s but the tunes have an extra catchiness that sucks you in and pulls you under my friends. Such a good band! www.direrecords.com. Firebrand features another *MRR* columnist, Osa Atoe, and Candise from one of my favorite HC bands of 2009, the Necro Hippies. They have this cool Young Marble Giants undercurrent, an unsettling but calm feel, with propulsive bass and drums. Really excited to hear/witness what these ladies come up with in the future! shotgunseamstress@ gmail.com for more info on that!

Also from our UK correspondent I got an amazing fanzine, *Langon Olgar*. I think it will get a proper review in the next issue, but I wanted to write about it briefly here as I was so blown away by it. Created by a bunch of girls for Hollaback London, it looks more like a literary journal than a zine; it's beautifully put together and the writing inside is really powerful. Word from Ms Beynon herself:

"Back story for review tru-facts: first issue, launched at Reclaim the Night (wish I'd met your mum when we was there!) made to raise funds for Hollabackldn which we also distribute to related feminist/community orgs (Southall Black Sisters, Croydon Rape Crisis) limited to 100—it's $10/6quid unfortunately. For contact bryony@hollabackldn.com works and order at direrecords.com or ldn.ihollaback.org . Oh and Langdon Olgar is Lisa Simpson's one time boyfriend, ha!"

Resistance in the face of rape culture. There are pieces about street harassment, sexual harassment, assault, rape, sexual politics, the exclusion of women fr--om certain spheres, power, powerlessness. Writing is both personal and theoretical, some of it is a difficult read and will be triggering obviously. I will write a full review next month in the zine section when I have gotten my thoughts together. Seriously though, this is one of the most important feminist DIY projects I have read in years...

OK, sorry for the rambling column! I am not sure if you read my column last month, but I am stepping down as content coordinator in May/June of this year. If you are interested in applying for the position hurry up and email us for info! Applications must be in by March 15th. I will still be working on the magazine and staying in the Bay Area, but just not coordinating *MRR*. It will have been about three years and I just need a break

Old columns: whatwewantisfree.blogspot.com
layla@maximumrocknroll.com

A guest column was submitted and printed this issue that discusses some of the debates brought up by the recent years explosion of the DIY and garage communities involvement with Scion. I have been reading a lot of message board debates (gag.) about Scion sponsorship for several months now and while there are people who feel strongly about the issue, most people just have an "icky" feeling abut it. Well, while I can't speak for the DIY or punk community, I can speak for myself. I am calling bullshit. If you are a punk band, Scion sponsorship of your band is awesomely lame. I don't know why everyone is curiously silent about this. My guess is because Magrudergrind's decision to release a record paid for by Scion was a shock to many and disappointingly expected by others.

While a popular metal site advises whom ever is judging Magrudergrind poorly for their decision to "get the sand out of their vaginas", I would like to say that Magrudergrind's move does not have anything to do with my vagina, but it does have something to say about the state of punk.

I am not sure about the deal with punk releases on Scion, but from what I have heard about the metal releases, Scion gives bands $5000 for recording, production and distribution of a CD. The CD is given away for a limited time. Scion does not have any rights to the music and several years later, the band supposedly has permission to release the material on a label of their choice.

I guess I wonder who the hell is gonna want a vinyl version of shit that has been passes out en mass for free? It will be everywhere. Also, how many punks with integrity (haha, get it... Integrity played a Scion fest) are going to run out and buy that shit? I guess you can argue that you can wait for the Scion shit to be released on a proper DIY label instead of sneakily picking up a free copy the next time you go to your hip street wear Urban Outfitters for punks store. In the end, the recording is still paid for with blood money.

Independent record stores have a dilemma now presented to them. In order for a store to get their hands on Scion releases to give away, the store has to become Scion sponsored. The store has to pay Scion a monthly fee and give people who present a Scion rewards card a 20% discount. If the store agrees to these terms, Scion sends the store more give away items and the store is listed in the Scion magazine and website. Does this seem like a fair trade to you? The aim is to have certain kinds of business involved like independent record stores, hip clothing stores, tattoo shops, etc... Some one on the BCO board posted an article from Fortune magazine regarding Scion's marketing strategy (http://money.cnn.com/2010/09/24/autos/toyota_scion_saturn.fortune/index.htm) that asserts at its inception, Scion was aimed at DIY "edgy generation X" culture.

With that said, the claim that bands are "getting one over" on the car company because they are getting free shit on their own terms is being made. That is one perspective I guess, but when a big power differential exists like this, the argument that somehow taking this Scion money is empowering is a joke. The DIY punk community has been building itself on its own terms for decades and the infrastructure is in place and malleable enough to introduce new ways of commerce so that even though shit still costs money, we can do it our selves. Introducing "corporate philanthropy" to the equation corrupts the very idea of DIY. I understand that getting your music out to people is a big motivation, but at what cost?

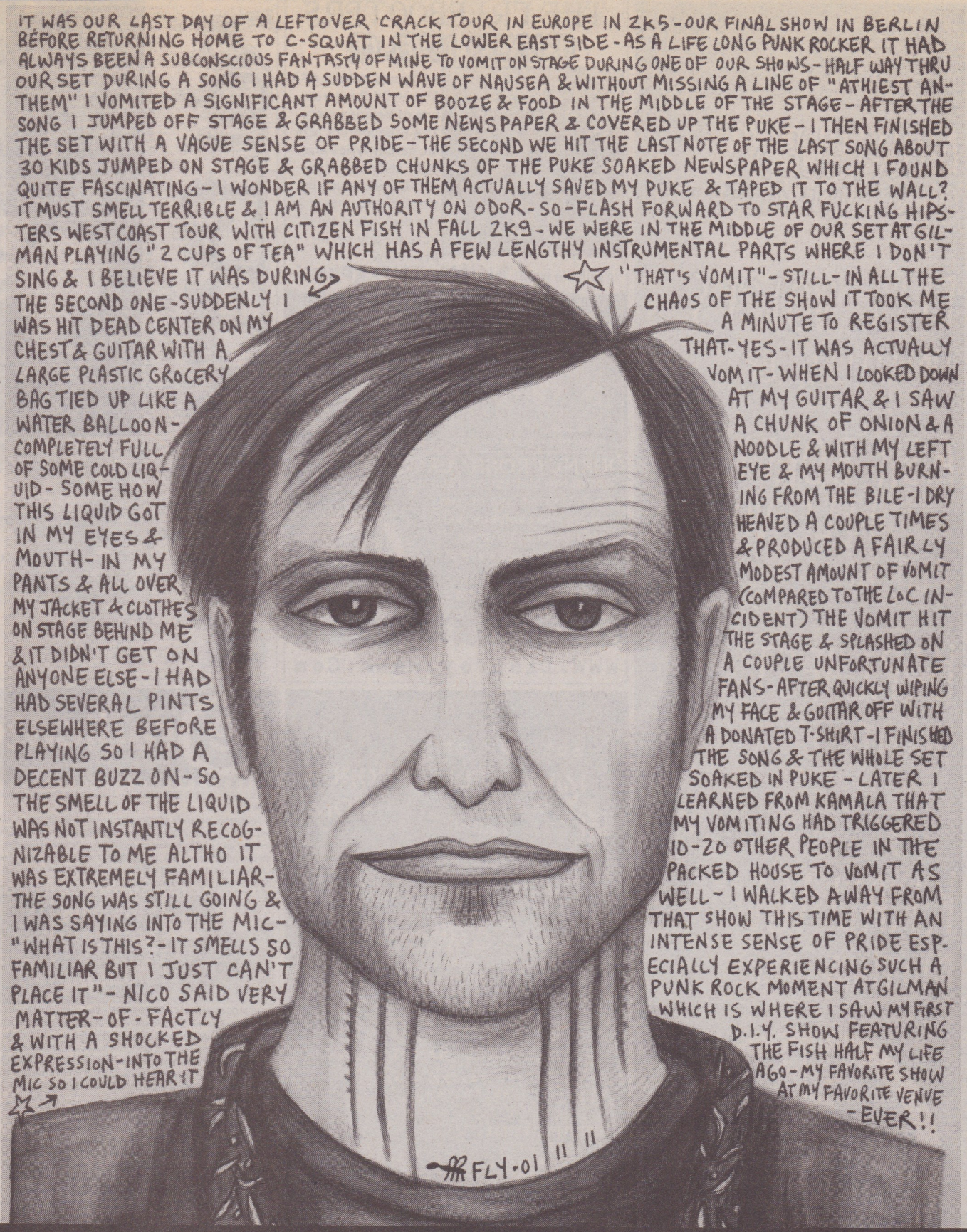
They are taking advantage of the DIY ethic of money being the last motivation to create music. Notice I didn't say that we don't need money and we should go back to some pastoral existence. I know everyone needs it to live, but when you want it, that's a different matter. I think most punks would agree that they never thought playing in a band was gonna pay the bills. So the argument is, why not get paid to do this? Isn't punk worth something? Yeah, it's worth something, but money is not part of the creative equation here. I understand that we have a system of economy with in the punk scene between labels, record buyers, bands, distros, etc... in which there is a tacit agreement that money is needed to put out kick ass music. Some labels take advantage of collector culture and pull some dumb shit (another column), but usually, the idea is to recycle money back into the scene to keep it going. To give more bands an opportunity to be heard. We don't need Scion money to keep this going. Why is it that suddenly someone waves 400 bucks in you face and your music is worth that because it's more than you have been paid before? You are not only devaluing the integrity of your music, but the value as well. If you think 400 bucks is what the monetary value of your music is worth, then you deeply underestimate the effect it has and therefore so will I. If your band needs 400 bucks night to tour, try to open for the next Kings of Leon. You aren't a punk band.

This issue has cover art by an artist that has done a flyer for a Scion related event. We didn't know at the time, but when I asked her about it she said they do not pay the flyer artists.

Aside from what it can potentially do to the punk community, there are other issues that corporate sponsorship that people tend to ignore... Look up Toyota's record for human rights violations. It's some nasty stuff. I know that Magrudergrind claims to be non political per say yet still have DIY ethics, but fucking come on... People will argue that it's impossible not to contribute to human misery and exploitation when you live here in the US or in parts of Europe. I know that all too well. We all haven't much choice, but we do still have some choices. I am not devoid of buying or using products that have some nasty ties (I do like to have a soda once in a while) and we all know that "sustainable living" takes lots of effort and is often a luxury for the rich (that's another column), but when a punk/DIY band flagrantly *takes* money from a corporation with the ties Toyota has, well, that is ugly... I hope that the members of Pulling Teeth can pat themselves on the back knowing that. I hope your trip to Europe and the hotel room was worth it.

I could go on, but space is limited and this admittedly a last minute column, which I will inevitably wish I had changed some shit on, but what the hell... My rules... I know that by even mentioning this issue, Scion is getting their money's worth, but it's not going to go away and by playing these fests and letting them release your records with out any critique is irresponsible. When it comes down to it, bands that are sucking the Scion teat are a small bump in the road of a history of our subculture that brings up debates that will never end. Punks will still thoughtlessly take blood money with no regard to its effects and label it "post modern" or "ironic". Punk and DIY is going to go on with out bands that like to take corporate money and rationalize it. How Embarrasing.
mariam@maximumrocknroll.com

Scion's allies:
The Spits, Dan Melchior, Human Eye, Sex Beet, Strange Boys, Natural Child, No Bunny , Jacuzzi Boys, Kid Congo Powers and the Pink Monkey Birds, Hunx and his Punx, Oblivians , Andre Ethier, Cheap Time, Bomb , Bad Sports, Black Lips, Pierced Arrows, Dirtbombs, Davilla 666, Jack Oblivian and the Tenessee Tearjerkers, Mannequin Men, Municipal Waste, Integrity, Ceremony, Pulling Teeth, Blacklisted, Ringworm, Acid Tiger, Magrudergrind, Trash Talk, Nails, Iron Age, Fuck the Facts, Fight Amp, Best Coast, The Almighty Defenders, Brimstone Howl, Cola Freaks, Digital Leather, Gentlemen Jesse and His Men, Gories, Lamps, Lover, Rooftop Vigilantes , Sonic Chicken 4, Strange Boys, White Wires, Raveonettes, The Ponys, King Khan and the Shrines, Cloud Nothings, Best Coast, Thee Oh Sees, Times New Viking, Nodzzz, Happy birthday, GayeB, Teenanger, Garotas Suecas, Brutal truth, DRI, Saviours, Thou, Baroness, Kylesa, Neurosis, Toxic Holocaust



STURGEON (FORMERLY THE ARTIST KNOWN AS STZA CRACK) - 01/11/11 - LOWER EAST SIDE NYC

I HAVE KNOWN STURGEON SINCE THE VERY EARLY 90'S WHEN HE WAS ABOUT 13 YRS OLD & POPEYE WOULD BRING HIM TO THE GARGOYLE MECHANIQUE LAB WHERE I WAS EMCEEING THE OPEN MIC - STURGEON WOULD PLAY ACOUSTIC GUITAR & I WAS VERY IMPRESSED BY HIS PERFORMANCE SKILLS - SINCE THEN I HAVE SEEN ALL HIS BANDS - NO COMMERCIAL VALUE - CHOKING VICTIM - LEFTOVER CRACK & THE CURRENT LOCAL SQUATTER HEROS - STAR FUCKING HIPSTERS - I REMEMBER GOING TO CHOKING VICTIM SHOWS WITH ONLY A FEW PEOPLE IN THE BASEMENT OF ABC NO RIO & NOW HUGE MOBS OF KIDS COME TO HIS SHOWS - STURGEON MAY BE WELL KNOWN FOR SHENANIGANS LIKE TOSSING DONUTS AT THE POLICE DURING A SHOW OUTSIDE THE 9TH PRECINCT BUT HE SHOULD ALSO BE RECOGNIZED FOR THE MANY BENEFIT SHOWS HE HAS PLAYED OVER THE YEARS - SFH IS CURRENTLY WORKING ON A NEW ALBUM COMING SOON ON FAT WRECK CHORDS - FIND OUT MORE INFO: STARFUCKINGHIPSTERS.COM - OR - MYSPACE.COM/STARFUCKINGHIPSTERS - OR SEARCH FOR THEM ON FACEBOOK - TO CONTACT FLY EMAIL: FLY@PEOPS.ORG OR SNAIL FLY PO BOX 1318 COOPER STN NYC NY 10276 USA - FOR PEOPS & OTHER FLY MAGGOT-ZINES TRY MICROCOSMPUBLISHING.COM

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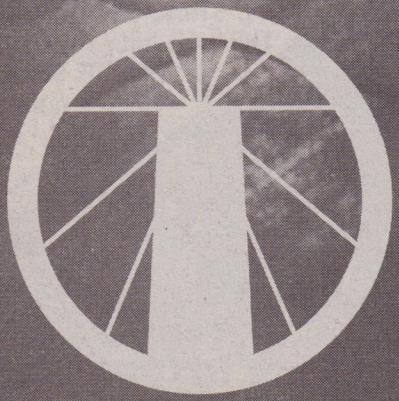

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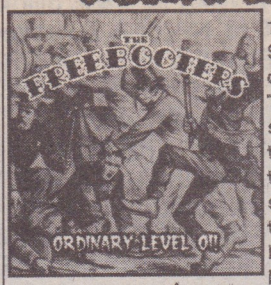

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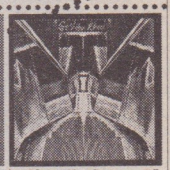

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NEWS

MRR NEWS COMPILED BY Carolyn Keddy

WE NEED CHANGE, WE NEED IT FAST, BEFORE ROCK'S JUST PART OF THE PAST

By Reyhan Harmanci from the Bay Citizen

In a shocking move—to DJs as well as fans—the University of San Francisco has sold KUSF and taken the free-form 34-year-old station off the air.

In an online press release, USF details its move. "The university has reached an agreement to assign the FCC license for radio frequency 90.3 FM to Classical Public Radio Network, which is launching a non-commercial classical music station in the Bay Area," said the statement, noting CPRN is owned by University of Southern California.

Effective immediately, as the now-blank KUSF website shows, the station is moving to an online-only format. USF's statement said that the station will go dark briefly for "engineering work."

The news seemed to come as a total surprise to station workers. On Twitter, DJ Carolyn Keddy said, "Just showed up at KUSF to my show and the doors are locked. USF has sold the station. Management was in on it. They're keeping all our records."

USF also said in its statement that all workers would be offered their jobs in the online-only era. We'll update with more info as we get it, but the SF music community is already reacting with sadness about the loss of the long-running staple of the scene. As musician Chuck Prophet noted on Twitter, "The apocalypse is here. Still reeling over KUSF being sold off." The station says an impromptu demonstration is planned for 7 p.m. tomorrow.

At 10 a.m. this morning, Irwin Swirnoff, a DJ and music director at KUSF, was doing some volunteer work in the station when he heard an alarming thing: silence. Or rather, the sound of static as USF, per an agreement with USC-owned Classical Public Radio Network, cut the transmitter.

To those present at the station, including the on-air DJ, Howard Ryan, it seemed that no one had been given warning of the sale.

"The hallways filled with people in suits, and others started to change the locks," said Swirnoff of the scene immediately after the transmitter stopped working. He, along with other station workers, didn't mince words about their feelings towards USF. "The university had been keeping this from us, hadn't involved us at all," said Swirnoff, speaking from the work room of KUSF, where he and other volunteers have been frantically pulling records of past ticket winners and music press, trying to get the word out that KUSF had been unfairly brought down.

University spokesman Gary McDonald affirmed that USF had kept information about the station's sale—which was a $3.75 million dollar deal—quiet, but said that two of the four full-time workers did know about it. Discussions, he said, had been taking place for the past few months.

"The papers were signed on Friday," McDonald said. He cited confidential legal reasons as the cause of USF's silence to the station's volunteers.

While the format change, from radio broadcast to online-only, is obviously the largest change, McDonald also pointed to other transformations in the works. "We are going to refocus the station on its primary purpose as a teaching lab for students," he said. "We are looking at ways to enhance curriculum in digital media."

Swirnoff and others, meanwhile, are trying to rally the public behind the station. The FCC filing allows for 30 days of public comment before the sale goes through. Why, he asked, was the station not given a chance to buy itself if the university was so desperate to sell?

"We never had the opportunity to do outreach," he said, amid the hubbub of a noisy room. "For a school that prides itself on Jesuit values, it is acting in the interests of greed and dishonesty."

McDonald said that, right now, the full context of this move hasn't been made public, but there will be an announcement this afternoon that will place these events "in a larger story."

UPDATE: More details about recent KUSF goings-on are coming out. Last week, it seems that station managers informed volunteer staff that the station would be moving into a new, smaller studio on campus.

This was not wholly unexpected, as a KUSF volunteer who wished to remain anonymous said that station founder and manager Steve Runyon had dropped a hint this summer that KUSF would be moving—although, then, the thought was that it would move off-campus, to Fort Mason.

USF spokesman McDonald acknowledged the inopportune timing of the announced move, but said it was unrelated to the change in format—the building needed rewiring and had plumbing problems.

And the SF Chronicle's Peter Hartlaub said that the KUSF move was part of a larger deal. It seems that classical music is set to make a comeback in the Bay Area—USC is purchasing classical music station KDFC so that it will now broadcast on 89.9 FM and KUSF's now-former 90.3 FM. This deal means that KNDL, a North Bay Christian station, will also be losing its signal.

In a press release, Entercom Communications and USC used quotes from SF Symphony director Michael Tilson Thomas and SF Opera touting the move as a positive step for Bay Area classical listeners. Also as part of this deal, Entercom will be broadcasting classic rock on both 98.5 KFOX (from San Jose) and 102.1 in SF.

USF spokesman McDonald said that the deal was kept confidential on the wishes of the buyer, USC, although that was a common practice in a situation such as this. He said that the station could reopen as soon as Thursday, and the website would go back up as well. In response to those who protested the move, McDonald emphasized that KUSF isn't ending—it's merely streaming.

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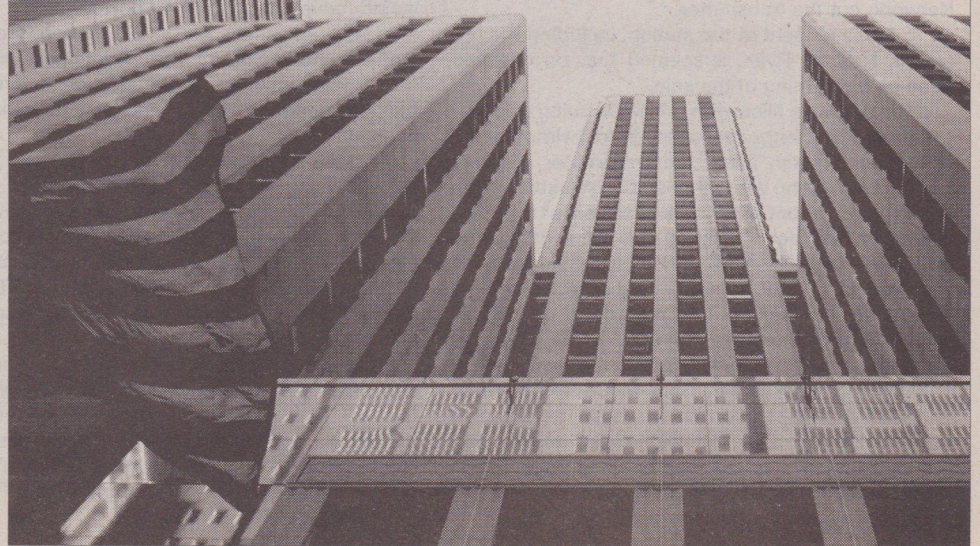


WASHINGTON D.C.

SCENE REPORT

This report is the combined effort of David Combs, Carni Klirs, Beck Levy, Brian Lombardozzi, Henry Mesias, and Chris Moore. All photos by Erik Gamlem.

Greetings from the District of Columbia, the last land-locked colony in the United States, the place one time known as "Chocolate City" because it used to be 80% African American (based on the 2009 Census its currently 54%). DC has given birth to GO-GO music, BAD BRAINS, MINOR THREAT, and FUGAZI, but it is better known to the world as the place where decisions are made that effect the population of the world. DC is a strange place to be a punk.

A lot of punk bands rail against the government, politicians, and "the system." Living in DC, we punks wake up every morning and stare "the system" in the face. We walk the same streets, ride the same public transportation, and sit in the same parks as the folks making the decisions that make "the system" function. To top it off, we DC residents pay taxes and have no vote in Congress. Legislators from other parts of the country dictate the amounts of money we get to fund public education and even the raises our public employees receive. We live in the nation's capital, yet we don't even have the same "rights" as most of you that are reading this in the U$A. So just by living here it is safe to say we have a few reasons to be pissed off, so some of that may come across in the music you've heard come out of DC.

We're going to do our best to give you an accurate description of what all is going on here in DC right now. Please keep in mind that it has been a while since the last DC scene report was written, so we may not be able to get to everything.

When most people think of DC punk, their first thought is

MAGRUDERGRIND

DEATHRATS

DISCHORD RECORDS, and while we've got nothing but respect for the house that Mackaye built, these days Dischord represents DC punk about as much as Rick James represents Buffalo.

While it may be the capitol city, DC has a small town feel. There are no huge bands, and barely a couple steady DIY venues, but DC punks will always find places to do shows. The scene isn't segmented by sub-genres, but rather there are plenty of different musical currents that flow together easily without the usual tensions you'd expect putting an indie-pop band and a grind band on the same show.

Benefit shows are the norm here, as there's a strong history of the punk scene supporting local radical organizations. Political prisoner support, H.I.P.S. (Helping Individual Prostitutes Survive), D.A.S.H. (District Alliance for Safe Housing), We Are Family (low income grocery delivery) are just a few of the causes DC punks have banded around. With that said let's move along to bands.

Sludgy grunge ladies TURBOSLUT called it quits more than a year ago, but not before leaving a big impression on DC with their confrontational attacks on the DC patriarchy. Lead visionary, Beck has recently started THE GIFT with Henry/Hank from EXOSUS and Mikey T from TRADITION DIES HERE. THE GIFT will have an LP out on AMOR Y LUCHA in early 2011. DEATHRATS, a crustcore band is keeping the pro-lady vibes alive with their brutal fem-posi barrage. Watch out for a new DEATHRATS 7" this winter, and also in the near future an LP from their elders in brutality, SICK FIX, whose fast sXe HC has made them the most rallied around hardcore band in DC. Their front lady Michelle instills the fear in even the toughest Cold World fan. Two newer bands that share members with DEATHRATS/SICK FIX are STATE VIOLENCE, chaotic

raw d-beat, and HOT MESS who are four ladies playing ovaries-to-the-wall riot grrl influenced hardcore. Also in the incestuous mix up of shared members is LOTUS FUCKER who blast out some more noisy chaos. Also featuring members of all the previously mentioned bands are '90s vegan straightedge, HUBRIS.

To continue on the hardcore tip TINY BOMBS—melodic hardcore punk, TROOPS OF TOMORROW—oi! influenced hardcore. If you put NO TOLERANCE and SSD in a blender you'd have RATIONS, on the faster side you have WARBOUND—for fans of NEGATIVE APPROACH and INFEST. THE GUILT play no stop, no bullshit, fastcore. The four barely-legal kids in BROKEN BODIES play passionate hardcore with tons of energy. LION OF JUDAH and GIVE deliver mind freeing hardcore. DOMINO TEAM featuring the almighty Arnold from the Black Cat, laying out old school, don't give a fuck NY-style hardcore anthems. POLICE & THIEVES, featuring members of WORN THIN, are on the more melodic side of the hardcore spectrum. While most of these bands are relatively new, DC does have a couple of veterans.

MAGRUDERGRIND, who have been serving you that sick, fastcore grind sorcery for about 8 years now will be dishing out a new 10" EP later this month. Sharing MACGRUDERGRIND members and on the more sXe end of things is the face melting hardcore of COKE BUST, whose new 7" should be coming your way later this month. Another band that shares members of MACGRUDERGRIND is the sludging grinding force that is D.O.C.

Also hitting the old fart range, with ten years under their belt, is THE MAX LEVINE ENSEMBLE, who continues to blast your ears with weird catchy political tunes. They have new records in the works and a ten year anniversary party January 2011. Though traditionally THE MAX LEVINE ENSEMBLE has been the only pop punk band in DC, they've recently been joined by the indie, ear pleasing AMBULARS. Also on the pop punk tip is REAL TALK.

In terms of the post-punk sound DC has become known for, BIRDS AND WIRES are a crew of post-hardcore veterans featuring current and ex-members of 1905 and AGHAST. They have a four song EP out on Amor Y Lucha, and will be recording again in 2011. THE FORDISTS are a three piece that sound like the bastard child of FRODUS and FUGAZI, and will also have a full length LP out on Amor Y Lucha in 2011. CEPHALOPODS features Hugh from

LOTUS FUCKER

IMPERIAL CHINA

BLACK EYES, Wells of EARLY HUMANS, and Fiona of ET AT IT. IMPERIAL CHINA is a trio that mixes aggressive, angular riffs with swirling mathy electronics. BUILDINGS (aka BLDGS) play instrumental music that can be loosely tagged post-rock. LAUGHING MAN is a trio that blends garage punk, indie rock, and calypso with a folk-soul-blues-jazz. HUME plays energetic, experimental pop.

On the acoustic end of things, TMLE front guy, SPOONBOY has been playing solo quite a bit with his smart catchy attacks on the patriarchy, and TMLE bass dude Bepstein recently started performing as THE BEPSTEIN SHOW—solo acoustic songs backed by a holographic army of pre-taped Bepsteins to blow your mind. JAKE LAZOVIK and JAMES DISASTER have been importing their introspective acoustic numbers in from the suburbs as well.

We aren't going to pretend like we don't have metal in DC. ILSA plays weed influenced metal ala BOLT THROWER meets COFFINS. REVOLTA is more on the '80s thrash tip, like SODOM, as well as SPINEBUSTER. BODYCOP is a lady fronted noisy metal band ala Swans. DRUGS OF FAITH brings you some grindnroll featuring members of ENEMY SOIL.

DC also has some garage rock. THE SHIRKS play loud, crunchy, three-chord punk songs. THEE LOLITAS are a local garage duo. TITLE TRACKS has its garage rock moments, but leans to the indie rock side of the spectrum. Barely on the edge of punk is TRUE WOMANHOOD who blend the freaky sounds of JOY DIVISION and WIRE. If you like noodle-y guitar indie rock, you will like MONUMENT and if you miss screamo then THE FEED is for you. The ex-PAGE 99 crowd is still alive in PYGMY LUSH who has managed to be all things at once, chaotic grunge madness or candle-lit hypnotic, acoustic jams depending on the night. Also from the same area is the noisy grungy TIDELAND. The DISCHORD crowd has really chilled out, but from time to time we're graced with performances by the EVENS, (IAN MACKAYE of uh... EMBRACE and AMY FARINA of THE WARMERS) and newer indie rock sweethearts THE ANDALUSIANS. The active Dischord roster includes JOE LALLY's solo work, THE AQUARIUM—a duo featuring over-driven electric piano, keyboards and drums, and MEDICATIONS, which features members of FAROQUET and SMART WENT CRAZY.

As far as where to see shows, HOLE IN THE SKY is a new warehouse / art space that has filled an important gap as a larger DIY venue in the city. ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH has been a home to POSITIVE FORCE, a long running punk activist collective and the wider DC punk community since the '80s and continues to house

punk, indie and hardcore benefit shows. In the summertime you can catch a slew of free outdoor shows at FORT RENO in Tenleytown courtesy of Amanda Mackaye. Otherwise, shows happen wherever we can stick them: sweaty basements, college campuses, vegan soul food restaurants, and sometimes at our city's punk owned all ages club THE BLACK CAT. For bands coming to town, you're better off avoiding any of the trashy club venues: THE ROCK AND ROLL HOTEL, THE RED AND THE BLACK, and DC9 aren't worth your time! If you are in DC, or looking to be here, there are some online places to find out about shows. dchardcore.proboards.com, the show listing thread is the go to place for punk and hardcore in DC. Dirtycityshows.tumblr.com is maintained well and updated regularly and will list DIY/all ages shows outside of the punk/hardcore genre.

Also aside from DISCHORD, DC does have other DIY record labels, here are a few: AMOR Y LUCHA has put out records by ZEGOTA, 1905, TRADITION DIES HERE, and REDENCION 9-11. Current Releases include THE GIFT and BIRDS AND WIRES, and upcoming release from THE FORDISTS. The label also trades with other international labels, so get in touch. www.amorylucha.org or amorylucha.bigcartel.com. MAGIC BULLET RECORDS operates just south of DC in Fredericksburg, VA- where they have a small store with a full selection of all things Magic Bullet (records, skateboards, DVD's, CD's, apparel, wheels, and more.) MAGIC BULLET has released DC area bands like PG99, MAJORITY RULE, CORN ON MACABRE, and FORENSICS.

HESITATION WOUND is a new label started by Brian Lam (DEATHRATS, LOTUS FUCKER) and Greg Mazur. The first release is a 7" by NY-based NATURAL LAW. hesitationwoundrecords.blogspot.com

RUFFIAN has been around since 1996, was started by Hugh from Black Eyes, and has released records by THE NO-GOS, BLACK EYES, SENTAI, and TURN PALE. www.ruffianrecords.com

SOCKETS is a label based in Washington DC to promote DC's experimental pop music and has released bands like IMPERIAL CHINA, BLDGS, and HUME. www.socketsrecords.com

DC also has a sporadically published zine *Give Me Back*. More info at: www.givemeback.org

There was a time when DC couldn't boast about the selection of record stores that bigger cities possess, but fortunately that shit is changing. In the past year a bunch of new stores have opened, and they are all great, check these out: SMASH! opened in 1984 and has since been the city's premier punk and alternative music and clothing store. Smash! specializes in punk, indie and alternative rock and roll CDs, LPs and 7"s as well as vintage and indie designer fashions. In the summer of 2006 they closed our longstanding location in Georgetown, but have since relocated to Adams Morgan 2314 18th ST NW Washington, DC 20009. Phone: 202-38-**SMASH** / smashdc@gmail.com / www.smashrecords.com. CROOKED BEAT has punk stuff, and a whole lot of indie rock. Although small there's always good stuff coming and going so don't give up on it if you don't find what you want the first time you go. Located at 2116 18th St NW Phone: 202 483-**BEAT** (2328) crookedbeat@crookedbeat.com / www.crookedbeat.com. SOM RECORDS is tucked underneath a hair salon on 14th Street NW, the new store is small but brimming with hard-to-find, mostly used LPs. Right up the street from the Black Cat at 1843

THE GIFT

CEPHALOPODS

BODY COP

14th St. NW. Phone: 202-328-3345. THE RED ONION is tiny, but their used vinyl and CD options are a force to be reckoned with. Located at the bottom of the Adams Morgan neighborhood at 1901 18th Street NW. Phone: 202.986.2718 / www.redonionrecordsandbooks.com / jharkavy@redonionrecordsandbooks.com .

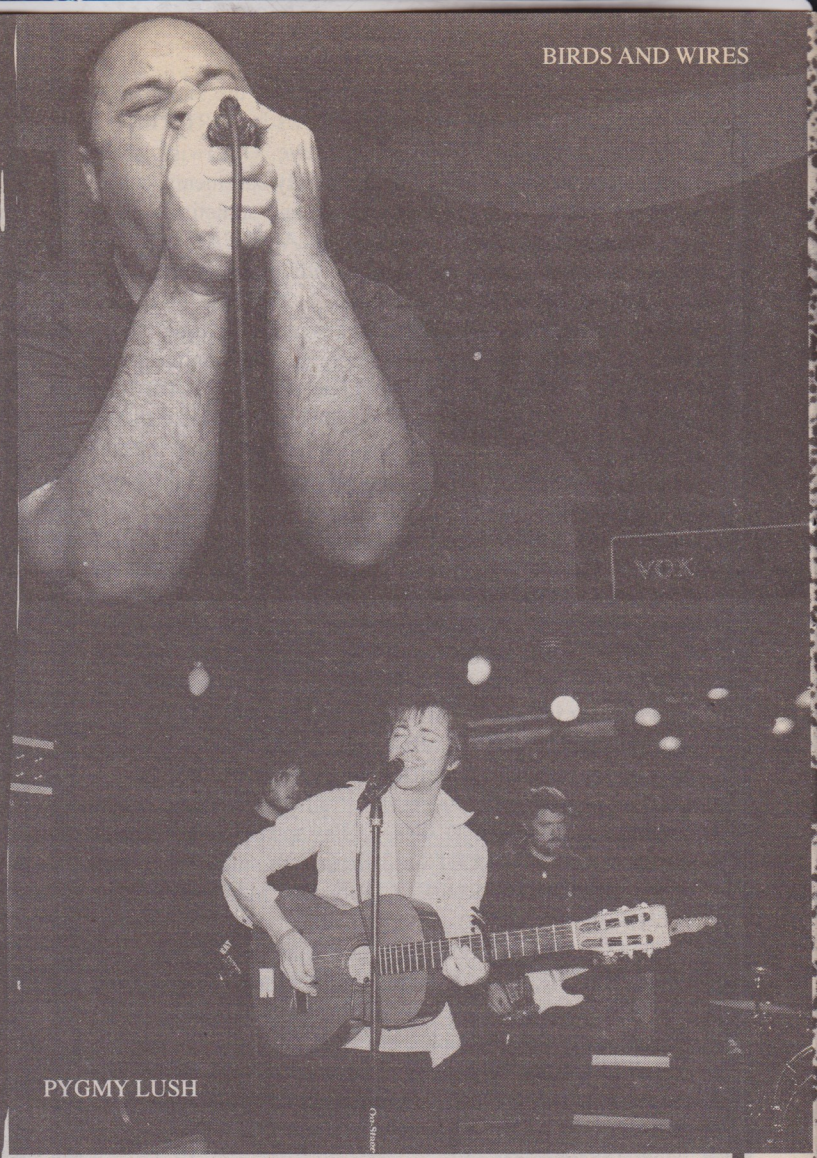
When DC punks aren't moshing, nodding our heads or snapping our fingers, you can find us scamming free wine from art shows at the CORCORAN, table-diving JUMBO SLICE pizza in Adam's Morgan, gorging on delicious Ethiopian food, or playing nighttime kickball in the summertime. C-LO is DC's dice game of choice, THE GIANT LAND SLOTH is the most popular attraction at the Smithsonian, and ROCK CREEK PARK is the biggest city park on the east coast, so we're doing alright.

If you are a punk on a budget, a vegan, a vegetarian, or just like food- you're in luck because we have a shit ton of great food places to eat. So here is the list:
JAVA GREEN at 19th and K streets. Has all vegan and vegetarian food—a bit pricey, but worth your time. HARMONY: Chinese food where everything on the menu has a vegan/vegetarian option. It's on M St. in Georgetown, which is a generally lame area, but Harmony is always pretty deserted and is a welcome shelter from the yuppies that walk the streets of Georgetown. CHINA TOWN GARDEN: More Chinese food. This place also has many vegan and vegetarian options, but is about 4 to 5 dollars more than Harmony. It's located in China Town. AMSTERDAM FALAFEL: Perhaps the best falafel in the city. They are located in the heart of the Adams Morgan neighborhood and have a toppings bar that you can load up your pita with a'la Europa. FOOD FOR THOUGHT: This café is attached to the Black Cat nightclub in DC. They have both vegetarian and non-vegetarian foods. Try the BBQ seitan sandwich. SOUL VEG: Vegan soul food across the street from Howard University. EVERLASTING LIFE: Great vegan food on Georgia Ave, NW recently has even booked a punk show or two. ASYLUM: predominately a bar. They have a crucial vegan/vegetarian brunch menu on the weekends. On Tuesday night they have a half price vegan/vegetarian food happy hour. BEN'S CHILI BOWL: This is 100% classic DC. Don't let the half smokes in the window scare you, they also serve vegan chili. Add some of that onto a veggie burger and you got yourself a pretty kick ass meal at 1am. STICKEY FINGERS BAKERY: DC's one and only vegan bakery. They moved to a new location on 14th and Park Streets. They also started offering lunch items. Try the vegan chili dogs. PIZZERIA PARADISO: Substitute soy cheese to make your oven pizza vegan and don't forget to try their bread with elephant garlic. Plus they have a wicked beer selection. ETHIOPIAN FOOD: DC has a large amount of Ethiopian food options. The best spots to find these are in Adams Morgan and U Street Neighborhoods. THAI FOOD: Most Thai places in DC have decent vegan/vegetarian options. Walk around Dupont Circle, and 14th Street. LATIN AMERICAN FOOD: Walk around the neighborhoods of Mt. Pleasant and Columbia Heights and you will discover a plethora of options. I recommend DOS GRINGOS in Mt. Pleasant, Taqueria D y F on 14th Street, or EL RINCONCITO II. in Columbia Heights at 1326 Park Rd. NW.

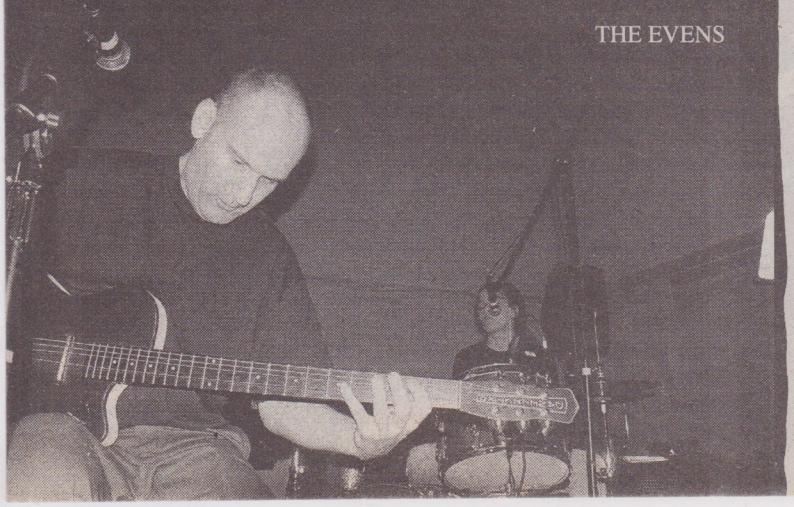
If you enjoy a good drink now and then here are some choice spots in DC where you can enjoy a good drink: THE BLACK CAT. Known as the "punk" bar/club in town. Although they don't really do punk shows here on a regular basis so much anymore, there is the occasional night where ISIS, or even RANCID will play. The club is separate from the bar, and it's even owned by the drummer from IRON CROSS. If you can't seem to get over your Dischord fetish show up here any night a Dischord band is playing and you can probably spot Ian MacKaye. All that aside, it's not a bad place and the bartenders would rather serve punks than the usual white collar garbage that seems to have been stumbling in there. If you are there on a Monday night and mention to your bartender that you read about this place in *MRR* s/he might actually treat you with respect. www.blackcatdc.com PHARMACY BAR: Although Friday and Saturday nights generally suck because it's overrun by shitbags from Maryland and Northern Virginia, every other day of the week is great. Not to mention the best, cheapest jukebox in the city. Have a PBR and listen to GOATSNAKE. Fuck Yes!

Punks, if you find yourself in DC for some reason- say a tour, to protest something, or even a vacation—consider yourself armed with the information you need to have a good time.

BIRDS AND WIRES



PYGMY LUSH



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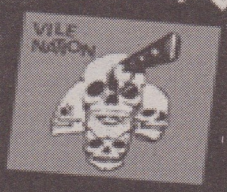

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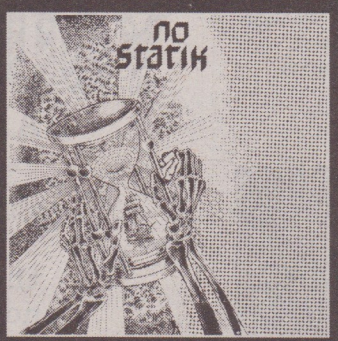

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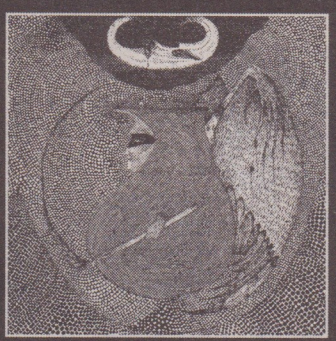

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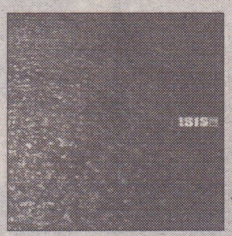

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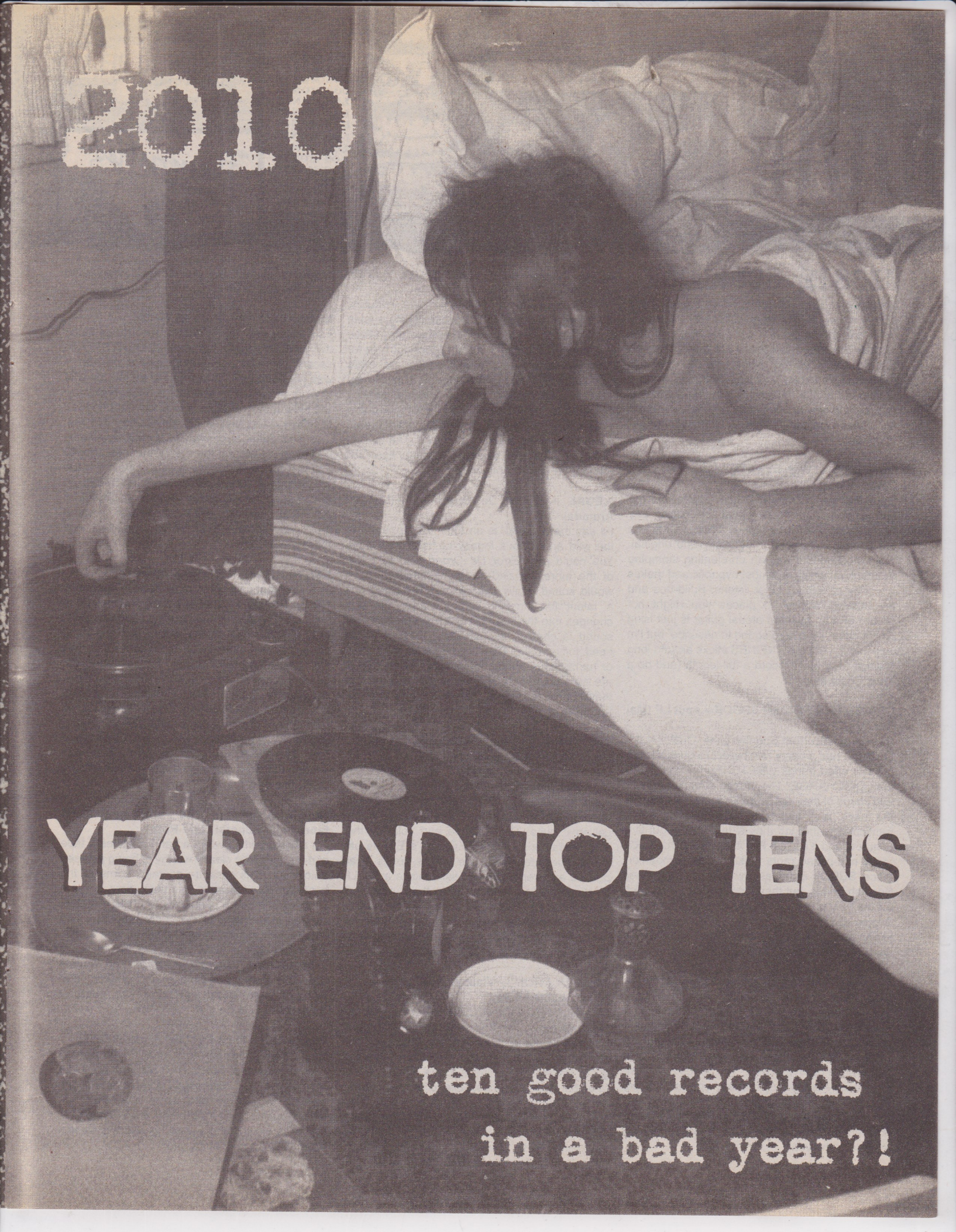

2010
YEAR END TOP TENS
ten good records
in a bad year?!

CISSIE SCURLOCK

Hardcore is thirty years old, which means it will only continue to get more difficult to attempt a fresh take on the genre. I can't say that all of the records that I've listed below are totally original, but the songs on 'em stuck with me, and the records stayed in my play pile for a good amount of time. To all the naysayers that think hardcore has nothing new to offer, I say "whatever." Here's my alphabetical top 11 ('cause 10 is not enough) of 2010.

CONFINES – "Withdrawn" EP (Labor Of Love / Side Two)
On *Withdrawn* CONFINES has tapped into the progression of hardcore without sacrificing any of the things that make it great. These four songs are completely powerful, dynamic, and original. The whole record has an unrelenting stomping momentum, which is almost hypnotic and makes it worthy of many repeat listens. Build-ups and breakdowns appear in places you might not predict and an agitated atonal guitar is just icing on the cake. It's a hard sound to describe, but I'm way into it. I hope CONFINES sticks around long enough to at least record a full-length (and do a West Coast tour!).

CRIMEN DE ESTADO / SUDOR – split LP (Mal Sonido)
As with most current Spanish punk, CRIMEN DE ESTADO has a nasty raw hardcore punk sound, but this effort brings WRETCHED to mind more than DISCHARGE. The crazed sounding speed and chaos of their songs make it seem as though the band is flirting with total collapse. They frantically fly through their side in just about five minutes, and it's bliss. Flip it over and SUDOR's raspy mid-paced rants make a nice companion piece. SUDOR is just as raw as a lot of the other Spanish bands, but they too have their own take on the raw punk sound. Aside from the ripping "Viejos Grupos Al Poder," all their songs are sickly and mid-tempo, with "Que Reviente la Justicia" being the standout burner.

FOGNA – "Merda Come L'oro" EP (Bat Shit)
Wild, effects-heavy hardcore punk from Italy. FOGNA has some of the flavor of traditional Italian hardcore, and like many of the early Italian bands they don't follow any conventions whatsoever. For instance, they're a two-piece band with a drum machine. The songs here reek of insanity—aided by frantically spewed vocals, layers of effects, and eerie intros and outros. These guys seemed to mysteriously come out of nowhere to release one of the most refreshing records of the year.

GLAM – "Duelo de Titanes" EP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
Playing six songs in less than five minutes, GLAM does a good job of accomplishing a lot in a short period of time. On the surface they prove that punchy and direct is still a good formula for hardcore. However, GLAM's songs are more than just condensed little rippers. Their sound is marked with a feeling of catastrophe-sensing paranoia and tension. It's the kind of music that makes you feel a little punished and out of breath if you let yourself get absorbed by it. The current trend of Spanish bands releasing essential hardcore records continues...

ILEGAL – "Error De Orden" EP (Lengua Armada)
I'd say that ILEGAL is an able heir apparent to the wild and furious legacy of hardcore's past. You could play *Error De Orden* next to some of the more frenzied hardcore classics and it would sound totally appropriate. The band has a talent for throwing unpredictable riffs and changes into their songs, and even though their sound is chaotic, the riffs tend to stick in my head for a while. They've mastered the sound of harmonious pandemonium. All the members are living in Montreal illegally, and I'm hoping that they'll barrel through the border guards and tour the US in 2011.

KRIEGSHÖG – "War For Peace?" LP (H:G Fact / La Vida Es Un Mus)
Even though I wasn't as immediately overwhelmed by *War For Peace?* as I was by *Hardcore Hell*, it's still a treat that KRIEGSHÖG managed to eke out an LP of material before calling it quits. The violence and volatility that was characteristic of KRIEGHÖG's EPs is still intact. The intensity of the band's songs is as precise as ever. However, listening to a full LP of music this powerful is more than unsettling, and by the time side two starts I'm exhausted. But, you know, I'm not trying to complain. I just learned to acclimatize my ears to 25 minutes of apocalyptic mantras. R.I.P. KRIEGSHÖG.

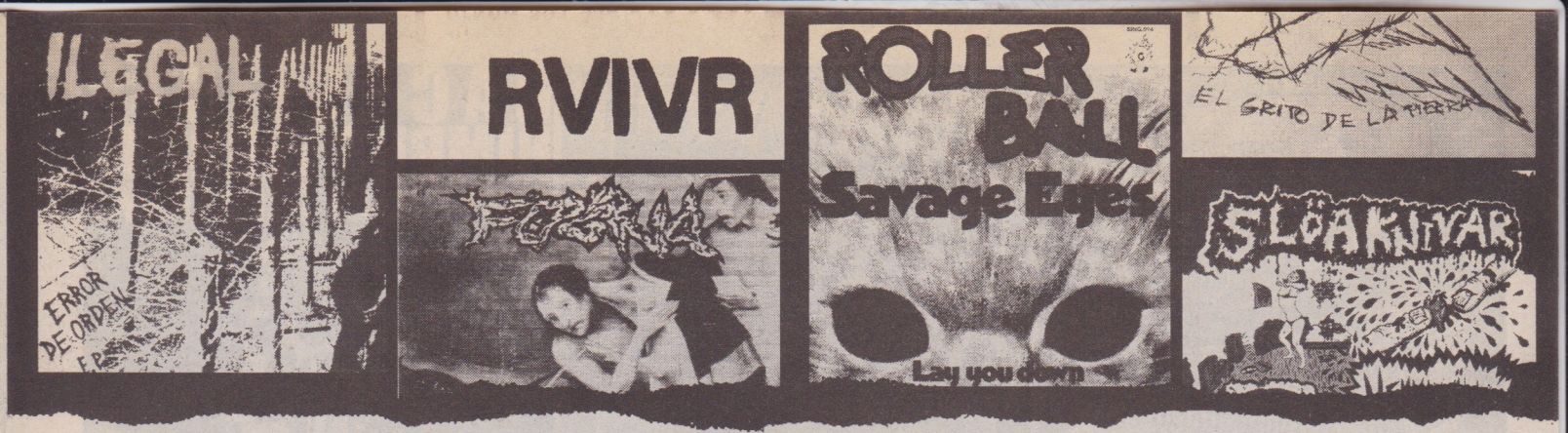
MANIPULATION – "Violence" EP (Fashionable Idiots)
MANIPULATION's first EP is a dense and raw hardcore rager. The rhythm section is heavy and pummeling, the vocals are angry and direct, and the guitar work is distinct. The multiple layers of guitar tracks add burliness to the overall sound. In fact, it would be impossible to write about this record without mentioning the guitars (for a third time, even) because of the layers of feedback, incidental noise, and clever noodling. The songs themselves add unusual twists and turns to the hardcore formula and remain forceful and engaging. This EP is a grower that's destined to stand the test of time.

MASSHYSTERI – LP (Feral Ward)
This is the only non-hardcore record I've listed this time and that's because MASSHYSTERI's second LP is the pop masterpiece of the year. It was my go-to pick when I had to trudge my way to work at 5am. The harmonies, though gloomy, are nice and comforting, which is what I needed to slowly wake myself up while riding the bus. The lead guitar is constantly finding new notes and weaving around the rest of the instruments, and the duel male/female vocals compliment the wandering guitar melodies. MASSHYSTERI no longer seems like Sweden's answer to GORILLA ANGREB, as they've completely created their own sound. This record is perfect and indescribably great.

NERVESKADE – LP (Black Water)
In a year that saw noise punk peak in popularity NERVESKADE's first LP is a fresh and distinctive take on the genre. Screaming, feedback, and utter disorder kick off the record, and the band doesn't relent until each side ends. Through the cluttered mass of sound I hear an energetic hardcore band with some really excellent songwriting. Songs like "Parasites," "Waiting For Death," and "Walking Waste" have all the elements of great hardcore, and NERVESKADE gloriously ravages them with noise, effects, and fuzz. This LP is an instant modern classic and anyone that favors demented sounding hardcore should enjoy it.

NUKKEHAMMER – "The Future of Siberia" tape (Solar Funeral / Life-Rot)
I'm always baffled when a band releases a tape of material that is clearly worthy of being pressed onto vinyl. This cassette contains some of the best hardcore released this year, even if it is a bit tongue-in-cheek. Sonically NUKKEHAMMER resides in the land of raw, dirty hardcore, and they're very mindful of writing songs with hooks. When the guitar kicks in at the beginning of "Skeletal Hand": *roaroaroaoraroar*! The sounds here are pretty devastating and chaotic, and won't be forgotten anytime soon. *The Future of Siberia* needs to be a 7"!

VILE GASH – "Life-Rot" EP (Youth Attack)
VILE GASH shows no mercy at all. Their attack is harsh, quick, and direct. Their strain of hardcore is mutated and diseased—a reaction to life existing as punishment, every day being the fucking same, everyone being the enemy. This record is violent and punishing and the perfect antidote to another shitty year.



And some honorable mentions: PROYECTO HOMBRE – "Cuerpos" EP, INEPSY – "Madness & Overkill" 12", CRAZY SPIRIT – "Burning Churches" EP, DESKONOCIDOS – "En La Oscuridad" LP, RAYOS X – "Mi Desorden" EP, TUBERCULOSIS – "Disfrasandose" EP

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

Ah shit! This is the fucking toughest thing to do at MRR. Coming up with our faves for the year. It is a pain in the ass because so many amazing or equally as great things get left out. For example the CRIATURAS demo tape was played endlessly in my pad or NO STATIK dished out awesome live sets, but I mostly end up just focusing on vinyl releases, so this sucks. Oh well, here we go. In no particular order cuz these are all fucking crucial, fist pumping, packets of wonderful noise.

GLAM – "Duelo de Titanes" EP (La Vida es un Mus)
Hijos de tres mil putas!!!! You are fucking with my mind. This record kills! You punks better not be thinking spandex and zebra prints when you hear this band name cuz it is the furthest thing from a late '80s hair rock nightmare. This EP will fuck you and your mother up, so don't even try it!

LOW THREAT PROFILE – "Kick My Heart" EP (Draw Blank / Deep Six)
This EP makes my jaw tense up in a really fucked and painful way. Tight as it gets hardcore done in that LA way, I can visualize the kids up front representing. It's yours motherfuckers.

DESANGRADOS/AMARGO – split EP (Contraorden / Odio los Discos)
How many split seven inches make a year end top ten? Not many at all, this is some raw and low-fi hardcore punk in the tradition of Peruvian vets. These two bands put tons of passion and fury in these tracks and it jumps right off the wax. Definitely up my alley and raging.

VILE GASH – "Life Rot" EP (Youth Attack)
When I was a kid in grammar school a psycho crazed nun snuck up behind me while I was talking to a friend and grabbed hold of my shoulders and shook the shit out of me. Fuck!!!! I will never forget how fucking freaked out I was. Fuck her and fuck this record because it took me back to that day.

SUDOR / CRIMEN DE ESTADO – split LP (Mal Sonido)
How many split *LPs* make a top ten? Yeah it is rare that it happens but here it is. These two bands have so much heart and energy. Everything about this record screams punk that I can't help but fall in love with it.

NOMOS – "Notes From the Acheron" LP (Deranged)
Ah, I just saw these guys the other night and I am sure this has swayed my opinion of the band cuz they were great live. The LP has tons of power and it sounds gritty as fuck. Good record.

HERATYS – LP (Not Enough)
This band has an EP and LP this year but this destroys. Something about the production or song writing is so vicious. For those who worship the Swedish hardcore sounds get on your fucking knees you unworthy sluts and worship.

VAASKA – "Ruido Hasta la Muerte" LP (540)
This seem to be one of the least known bands playing this style of hardcore. I am really into this mainly for the guitar melodies, they are subtle but after a few listens this shit clings onto your brain like an illness.

KRIEGSHOG – LP (La Vida es Un Mus / H:G Fact)
Are you tired of the same old sounds? Are you craving something like no other? Well take that razor away from you wrist and give this a spin. The newest release by this Japanese monster has dropped onto American soil and we like the children of Fatima stared up and waited for its arrival. This is completely over-the-top hardcore insanity. I witnessed it live and I was scared. Search this record out, for real!

NO STATIK – live
Seriously, every fucking show this band has played in the last year has left everyone baffled. Just when many thought hardcore was getting tired or stale NO STATIK came along and wronged them all.

FRED SCHRUNK

This year was a bad year for pop punk. Truly terrible. A lot of garbage came from that avenue (with a few exceptions of coarse). But it was a great year for hardcore. Lots of original and inspiring music came out this year. This is the shit that made life not so terrible this year.

EL BANDA – "Skutki Uboczne" 2xLP (Pasazer)
Before this record was assigned to me for review I'd never heard of them. Apparently they had released a by-the-numbers hardcore, but it went under my radar. When I put the needle down for the first time, my mind was blown. One of the few times that after listening to a full double LP I was left wanting more. Its dark and gritty lady-fronted hardcore from Poland. Sometimes the music is bleak and catchy, other times its totally brutal. And they experiment with a lot of different ideas and instruments. So the album continues to sound fresh all the way through. Probably the best album to come out this year! So epic!

NUCLEAR FAMILY – LP (Loud Punk)
This is probably the album I've listened to the most over this last year. Their 7" was good, but this album is a modern day classic. Featuring maybe the best current punk vocalist anywhere. The songs are catchy as shit, but Jen's vocals are what turn this album from great to unbelievable. It's short, so you'll end up flipping back and forth from A-side to B, several times before you choose a new record. And you're only doing that cause you're worried you might be starting to annoy your roommates. Fucking amazing album.

RVIVR – LP (Rumbletowne)
The best current pop-punk band made the best pop-punk album of this year. Everything about this band is super inspiring. Their music makes you want to start your own pop band. Their lyrics make you reflect on life and think about those around you. The music is certainly more on the upbeat side, but a lot of the songs are about some pretty heavy stuff. But no matter how heavy it is, or how much you currently hate your life; listening to RVIVR gives you this weird sunbeam of hope. I fucking hate this world and I hate my life; but not so much when I listen to RVIVR.

MASSHYSTERI – LP (Feral Ward)
I seriously flipped out over MASSHYSTERI's first album. It's one of the best albums of the last decade. So I had some inflated expectations for their follow-up album. The first time I heard it, I was disappointed. Thought it was too melodic. But a few of my friends were blown away and talked about the album constantly. So I decided to give it a second chance, and than a third chance, and now I'm up to around the 60th chance. I think somewhere around the fourth try is where I really understood how amazing it really was. Some of the best guitar riffs of any album this year. It is a bit more melodic than their first LP, but I wouldn't want it any other way.

LIBYANS – "Paralyzed / Keep Waiting" (Self Released)
This is a single side 7" and the songs appear on their full length that came out this year. The LP is totally crushing. Amazing. But I choose to put this record on my top ten rather than the full length only because I want to point out how mind blowing the song "Paralyzed" is. It may be the best song written all year. It's like an old AVENGERS song reinterpreted

Blood Of The Gods CD

"The Shadow Before" - Debut release. For fans of Bolt Thrower, Disrupt, Obituary & Stormcrow.

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SPAZZ - Crush Kill Destroy LP
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Split 12"LP-anthemic angry post-punk

IRON LUNG - 1st LP Repress
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THE PROCESS - Debut CD
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INFECT - Discography CD
Cult,all female thrash from Brazil

GET DESTROYED - Burnt EP
1000mph AZ dry-heat-violence

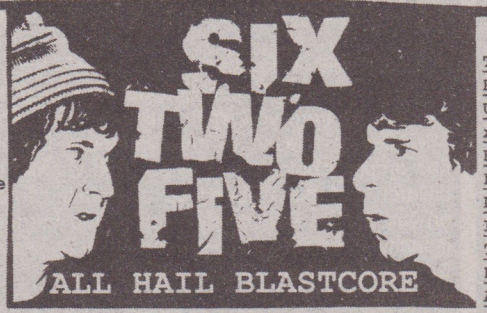
INSECT WARFARE - 1 Sided LP
Final from this legendary blast unit

AGENTS OF ABHORRANCE - CD
Crazed Aussie 3-man blurrcore

THREATENER - Discography CD
Coll.CD of 1000mph blasting fastcore

BREAKfAST/STRUGGLE4PRIDE-CD
Tokyo cult skate thrash

BREAKFAST "3rd and Army" LP
2nd LP-ballistic Tokyo skate-thrash



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RUNNING FOR COVER LP: 1000mph Fastcore
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TRAPPED IN A SCENE CD- Comp of pure blast
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APT. 213 CD:Clevo power-tool-violence
BAY AREA THRASH COMP:High energy local HC
SECOND OPINION CD:Fast HC - Demo/EP/Live
IRON LUNG-1st CD Crazy-two-man blurcore
DISCARGA 3rd LP/CD:Ballistic Brazilian HC
SLIGHT SLAPPERS-2nd LP Tokyo violence
ATHRENODY CD: Early 90s Death/Grindcore
NO TIME LEFT 10":Buffalo straight on HC
BANDANOS/DESTRUCT.END-CD:Crossover-Thrash
CHARM/UG MAN-Split LP:Tokyo thrashcore
CHARM - Shikami EP: Insane Tokyo fastcore
CRUCIAL SECTION/HIT ME BACK-EP:Int'l HC
KUNGFU RICK - Disco 2xCD:Insane grind/HC
IRON LUNG/SHANK LP/CD-Audio Brutality
BREAKFAST 2nd LP:Tokyo skate-thrash
BARBARIC THRASH CD COMPS:Euro,CaliComps
CRUCIAL SECTION-LP: 80s RIPCORD-thrash
SHANK-LP/CD: 1000mph power violence
MACHINEGUN ROMANTICS-CD: TX fastcore
QUILL/I DONT CARE-Split CD:Tokyo thrash
HE WHO CORRUPTS CD: Corporo-grind-o-caust
SCHOLASTIC DETH-Coll. CD: READ DAMN IT!
LORDS OF LIGHT-EP Original 3-man grind
SEEIN RED/FPO CD:Intelligent fast Euro HC
THEY LIVE-LP: Cult-classic NY fastcore
MOSH CIRCLE LP: Japanse thrash Comp LP
BxUxSxHx LP/CD:Brazilian rockin punk HC
Euro Thrash CD: Euro HC/Grind/Fastcore

through the imagination of someone listening to crushing hardcore for the last ten years. I listened to this single more times than I'd like to admit.

SHELLSHAG – "Rumors in Disguise" LP (Don Giovanni)
This album is fantastic. It makes it to my top ten just on the strength of the song "Resilient Bastard." But since the whole album is awesome, it made it towards the top of my favorite albums of the year. It's funny how a band that writes such good songs plays mostly covers live. But I guess that's what all the wasteoids want to hear.

DAYLIGHT ROBBERY – "Through the Confusion" LP (Residùe)
This record I'm sure will end up on a lot of top ten lists this year. It got quite a lot of hype around here at the *MRR* HQ. But the admiration is totally justified. DAYLIGHT ROBBERY is able to create a sound that tugs on the heartstrings of any rabid X fan, while also not simply coping their style. They created a whole new one that combines a dark Pacific Northwest WIPERS-style with the manic '70s LA punk. Totally killer.

AGATHA – "Nothing is Static" EP (Rumbletowne)
This is a dark and ugly hardcore assault. Sloppy as hell, super fast and devastating vocals. The band sounds like they're just barely able to hold it together. Like they could fall apart at any moment. You're walking on the edge of a cliff listening to this one. Great lyrics too. This is what I want punk to be.

SLÖA KNIVAR – "Hemmakvälls Massakern" EP (Ken Rock)
SLÖA KNIVAR was the dark horse of my top ten. When I wrote out the list of shit I was considering writing about, they didn't rank too high. But the more I listen to this album the more I knew this had to make the list. This album makes the juices in my brain boil. Total punk insanity with a singer that sounds like a possessed Linda Blair in the *Exorcist*. I feel like a maniac when I listen to this.

TWAT SAUCE – demo tape
This would have to be my vote for best demo tape of the year. This is a fucking treasure. These ladies play raunchy chaotic punk that I can only describe as a melding of BLATZ and FRUMPIES. It's totally gross, totally obnoxious, and totally mind blowing!

Deserves a mention:
YOUR PEST BAND / DEFECT DEFECT / GROANING GROVE – split 7", SIOUX – "Doppelganger" EP, HAIL SEIZURES – "For the Ruin" CD, SOPORS – "Golden Era #267" LP, GRASS WIDOW – "Past Time" LP, REACTION – "We Have Nothing to Lose But Boredom" 10", RAG RAGE – "Good, Wholesome and Sexy" LP, STREET LEGAL – Demo, DEAD WIFE – "DWSYHF" EP, CONVERSIONS – "Spineless Wonders" LP

KENNY KAOS

Okay, here they are, the top ten musical consumables of the year 2010. I say musical consumables instead of records because one of the ten is a video rather than a record. Some people will tell you that it's difficult to narrow it down to just ten. Those people are just plain wrong. These are, without any doubt at all, the top ten of 2010. Number eleven wasn't even close. And here's a little teaser for next year's top ten. The DIALS 7" that was just released on Dialogue Records will be on there fo' sho. In no particular order, except that the video gets to be on top, here are the Top Ten of 2010:

APACHE – "Finger Banger" Video
This is one of the funniest videos ever made to one of the raunchiest songs ever made. I could watch it over and over again, except that every time my wife hears it, she rolls her eyes and then hits me. The song itself is also quite catchy, which is always a plus for me. Oh, and if the communists at *MRR* won't let me put a video in here, then let's just switch this to APACHE's *Radical Sabbatical* LP (Burger).

ALICJA POP – "Shining Apple / Walking the Cow" (Certified PR)
Alicja Trout is the singer of The RIVER CITY TANLINES and has played in many other bands. This project takes her talents in an altogether different direction. This is pop music. Those who are more familiar with this genre than I am might even call it indie pop. Call it poop pop for all I care. It's straightforward, mid-tempo and catchy. This may sound odd coming from an *MRR* reviewer, but her voice is very pretty and almost delicate. For those into pop music, it reminds me of FROM BUBBLEGUM TO SKY. The B-side is a DANIEL JOHNSTON cover, if you care about those sorts of things.

MARVELOUS DARLINGS – "Teenage Targets / Lagoons" (Plastic Idol)
When these guys put out their first single, "I Don't Wanna Go to the Party" a couple years back, that song became my new favorite song ever. I also worried that they might be a one hit wonder. The song was just so catchy that I didn't think they could really match it again. While I'm not sure that they've matched that one, I am sure that they have put out a fair number of records since that first one and they are all just fucking great. If you are a fan of power pop from the late '70s, you will eat this up. Really, just an excellent band.

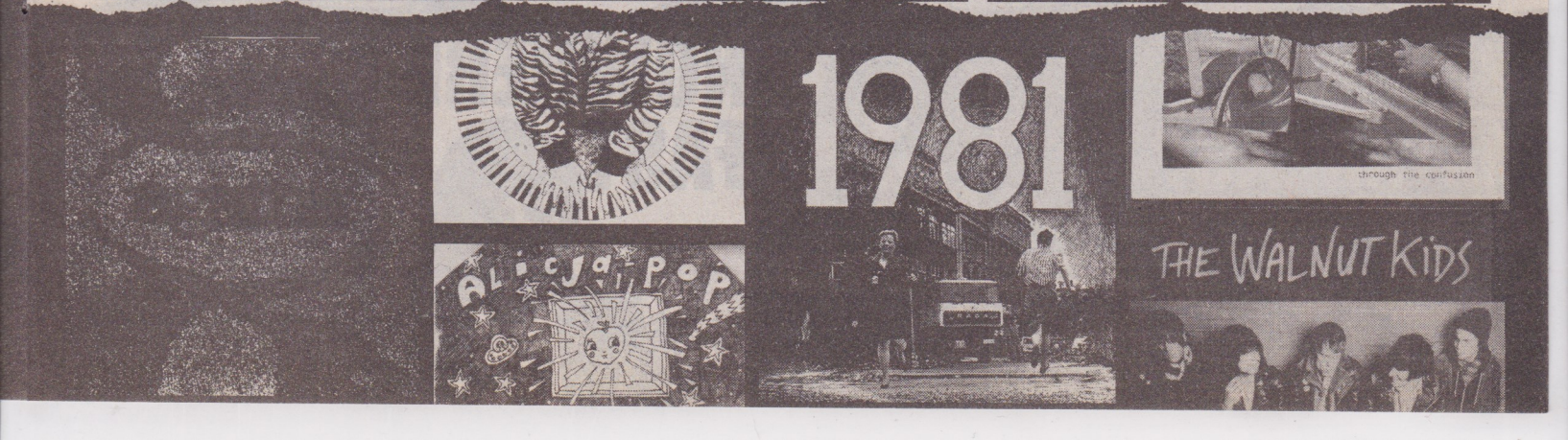
DAVILA 666 – "Ohhh" 12" (Rob's House)
This is possibly the best unknown punk band out there, unless all really good punk bands are equally eligible for that title. From Puerto Rico, these guys play punk rock that is infectiously catchy. Get this one and anything else you can find by these gatos. Just plain awesome. I hear they also put on an amazing live show.

GENTLEMAN JESSE AND HIS MEN – "She's a Trap / I Won't Say Goodbye" (Douchemaster)
The gentleman continues to put out pop music with a punk edge that will stand the test of time. He's no longer a secret, but that doesn't make him any less talented. This is Top 10 of the decade material.

THE PLEASURE KILLS – "Bring Me a Match" LP (Polypore)
When I heard their first single, "Smash Up the Radio", I fell in love. It's got everything you need. It's got hooks, it's got catchy (if catchy is something that you can get), it's got female vocals. What more could a guy possibly ask for? Pop music for punk people. Yes.

TRANZMITORS – "Sunday Morning / Jimmy's at the Mod Shop" (Meaty Beaty/No Front Teeth)
These guys have been going strong for a few years now and they do what they do extremely well. While most folks like to stick them in the "mod" category, it isn't quite that easy for me. To me, they've definitely got a vintage sound and you can't help but hear the JAM, but the singer reminds me Robert Smith or whatever that guy's name is from the CURE. I've never been let down by them.

WALNUT KIDS – "Can't Stand 'Em" EP (Going Gaga)
When I reviewed this record for *MRR* last year, the title track reminded me of another song, which I just couldn't place. It drove me nuts for weeks, until I finally pulled out a power pop/punk mixed CD that a man-friend of mine made me for Christmas a few years back. This WALNUT KIDS tune reminded me of (and still reminds me of) "Crazy Today" by UXB. In fact, I think that UXB should take the WALNUT KIDS to court, the People's Court. All that aside, it's top ten material.



BODIES – "Angel on the Nine / Open Your Eyes" (Modern Action)
There is something that I just love about punk rock music that is basic, bare bones and straightforward. Without sounding exactly like that time, this takes me back to SoCal punk from 1980 and the likes of SHATTERED FAITH and the SIMPLETONES.

NOBUNNY – "Brace Face" EP (Douchemaster)
NOBUNNY is probably a music genius. Either that or he's a sociopath. I believe he has roots in the SNEAKY PINKS and probably a number of other bands. He's fairly prolific and while most folks just rave and rave about him, some of his stuff misses with me. This one does not miss. This is NOBUNNY when he is right on. It is pure, catchy pop-punk genius.

And there you have it. And while it was a good year, musically, it will always be remembered by me as the year we lost one of the great ones. RIP Bruce.

AVI SPIVAK B/W JESSE GASFACE

The calendar year 2010 will most likely go unremembered in the annals of musical history, and probably not without good reason. However it is now time to reflect on the contributions of the past year. One record I have listened to a lot is NEIL YOUNG's "Le Noise." I know Reprise is probably some sort of "major" label and the readers of MRR may not appreciate these accolades, but I wanted to mention this one on the list too. Not only because I dig it but because it's punk. *Not just for the obvious reasons too, like the themes of drug use and fractured family life, but it's also full of despair, fear, and cynicism. Neil Young takes a lone-wolf approach and plays alone in an abandoned house and under a full-moon (or so I'm told), just a guy and his guitar. The sound ventures between full on electric guitar assault and sweet acoustic sentiment. Seriously, this shit is genuine and probably Neil's best since* On The Beach. *As a disclaimer, I must add that I don't generally seek out new music, and there's bound to be some really great and wonderful things that I haven't had the privilege of crossing paths with. Also, I'd like to add that I don't typically find it my place to publicly hand out such distinctions; I will nevertheless attempt it here. Now, in no particular order...*

EX-HUMANS – LP (Rob's House)
EX-HUMANS follow up two killer seven inchers and go all out with this debut album. EX-HUMANS haven't veered too far from what punk's supposed to sound like and that's what there is to like about this. It's fast enough, got cool songs (even an IKE AND TINA number!) and it will probably have you so amped up with adrenaline that you'll be staying up nights and taking in more drugs than you can remember.

APACHE – "Radical Sabbatical" LP (Burger)
Cool new album from Bay-Area heavyweights APACHE, on the promising Burger Records label. Stoner-punk-madness! This album was literally made by the no-count juvies your parents warned you about. It also has it all, from the proto-punk riffage of "Bloody Knuckles" to the heart wrenching tenderness of "Finger Banger" and is sure to brighten up your life or get you pregnant (If you're a chick).

UV RACE – "Homo" Cassette (Hidiotic)
Australia continues it's strong musical heritage with the UV RACE. This Melbourne group has to be one of the most interesting and original acts I've come across in some time. Total outsider anthems, and I'm told that this tape is gonna be an LP one day. But if you're reading *MRR* than I'm sure you're already hip to this...
I wasn't gonna include reissues on this list because they ain't really new. But allow us to be serious for a minute and acknowledge that there's a ton of great previously unreleased/ unavailable/too expensive records from the golden age of the punk-era that have begun to see the light of day. Thanks to the dedication and careful attention of labels like Sing-Sing and a couple of others there has been a recent resurgence of great punk releases, and I'm assured there's more on the way. Particular killers from the past year include: **ROLLERBALL – "Savage Eyes/Lay You Down" 45**, **V/A – "Rip Off Records" LP** and the **PROTEX – "Strange Obsessions" LP**.
And now because those are the only new records I know about I'm gonna allow the remainder of this year end top ten to be finished by my pal and former in-house record review machine at the fabled offices of Human Being Lawnmower Magazine (Issue #1+2 still available through my site), Jesse Gasface! This guy seriously pays attention and listens to more new records than anyone else I know, just ask the staff of Academy Records in Brooklyn about it. He's also the one man wrecking-crew behind Quality Of My Life the world's greatest formerly weekly newsletter. (Try to find one!) He also has an almost uncanny knack for being able to sum up a record in two sentences or less. Short and sweet!

V/A – "Brutales Mantanzas" LP (Cintas Pepe)
Some of the most awesome punk bands I've heard in forever hailing from Mexico and Peru. Got nothing but love for LOS MONJO and RATAS DEL VATICANO. Thank you list is too funny.

CRAZY SPIRIT – Demo and "Burning Churches" EP (Toxic State) and live, etc.
One of the best HC/punk bands NYC has to offer these days. Anything about them is better than your band, give up.

EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING – "Rush To Relax" LP (Goner)
These Aussie men prove that whether they're slowing it down in the six+ minutes of "Tuning Out" or the less than a minute of "Walked Into a Wall" that they can do everything right. Their two shows in NYC last June were amazing. Wish they just played more and did more records.

POPULATION 1280 – "The Grid" 12" (Sacred Bones)
Really sick, sleazy synth punk. Imagine if the DEAD BOYS were ressurrected in 2050, this is what the comeback record would sound like.

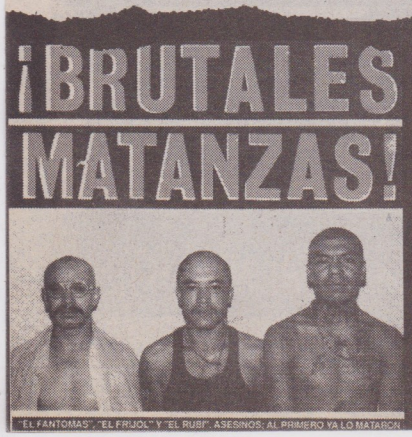
FRANKIE ROSE AND THE OUTS – LP (Slumberland)
Love the way she sings, they sound like the SHOP ASSISTANTS. It is a bad influence, I either drink a lot or smoke weed every time I listen to it.

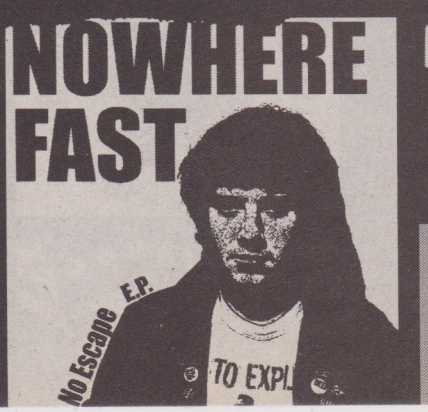
BRAD LAMBERT

7"s
NO STATIK – "Clarified, Distilled, Recomposed/We All Die in the End" (Iron Lung)
This band just fucking rules. Best band in the Bay and probably my favorite active hardcore band. Everybody in NO STATIK has previously been in at least one other amazing band so it's not surprising that they rule so hard. They are a great live band too. I saw them in a tiny basement in West Oakland a couple months ago and it ranks up in my top five wildest sets I've ever seen.

OUTLOOK – "No Purpose" EP (self-released)
This is some really good mid-tempo youth crewish hardcore with great political lyrics. It's so common in modern hardcore to find a nihilistic attitude, or when a band *does* care about issues they often suck or come off as preachy combined with infantile observations and analysis. This is not one of those bands. Smart social commentary combined with killer but slightly weird hardcore jams make for a rad band.

GRAY GHOST – "Succubus" EP (A389)





I reviewed this record for *MRR* and it blew me away. I get pissed because slow and super heavy hardcore just seems like such a good idea but then metalcore fucked it up for everyone. There's nothing metalcore about this record, it's more like doomed out hardcore with crushing bass and furious delivery.

PHARAOH – "I Murderer I/Two Thousand Seasons" (A389)
This is another super slow and heavy hardcore record similar to GRAY GHOST but with more of a sludge and noise flavor. PHARAOH and GRAY GHOST are on the same label and I want to see them tour together. Or they can both move to the Bay Area so I can see them all the time.

GODSTOMPER/DOS AMIGOS – split EP (To Live a Lie)
I went to the record release show for this but the record was still at the plant. I was stoked when I found it at the store before the cutoff for this list. Both bands are killer weirdo powerviolence duos. I'm a big GODSTOMPER fan and this record probably would have made the list regardless but it turns out that DOS AMIGOS rule as well.

VACCINE – "Human Hatred" EP (Painkiller)
VACCINE plays nearly perfect hardcore. Aggressive, fast, and hateful. This is a record I like to listen to when I think about how fucked everything is.

CROW – "Vertigo/Occupied Japan" (Prank)
I guess there are a few pressings of this record but I got mine at CROW's show in San Francisco and most of the text and all the lyrics are in Japanese. I had to look it up on the Prank website to get the name of the damn thing. An old band of mine used to cover one of this band's songs for years so I have a deep and abiding love for CROW and this record is fucking awesome. When hardcore gets this dark, slow, and brutal there should be another classification for it. Oh wait, there are no other bands that can do what CROW does.

HUMMINGBIRD OF DEATH/ SIDETRACKED – split 6" (Cowabunga)
This long awaited split is actually a 6" but I'm putting it on my 7" list. Both bands play rad fastcore but I'm a little bit biased toward the SIDETRACKED side. Hardcore dudes playing powerviolence often ends up done badly but this band is the exception.

I OBJECT – "Save Yourself" EP (Feral Kid)
This is probably the best midtempo hardcore band out there. There are two new songs on this disc along with a SCREAMERS cover. The only thing wrong with this record is that I want it to be an LP

CÜLO – "Military Trend" (Deranged)
I heard a lot of buzz about this record before I picked it up and usually that kind of turns me off to a band but it fucking delivers. Listening to this record makes me want to start my own crusty hardcore punk band. Anybody know a drummer?

LPs
ACEPHALIX – "Aporia" LP (Prank)
It's like if you took everything I like about D-beat crust and metal and had some huge scary looking dudes play it really aggressively. They're actually super nice dudes.

THOU – "Baton Rouge You Have Much to Answer For" LP (Robotic Empire)
This band had five releases last year and they all could have made this list. This record is the one I currently own so it's on here. It can not be overstated how much I like this band and they keep getting better. I would be hard pressed to name a better doom band and I know the names of a lot of doom bands.

PLF/IN DISGUST – split LP (RS)
PLF is the best grind band in the world and I'll fight you if you say otherwise. IN DISGUST will fight you. They also played killer West Coast powerviolence and were one of my favorite bands to see hands down until they broke up a couple months ago. I waited for this split to come out for a long time and it was like when the person you're dating won't put out for the first couple months of a new relationship. I started to resent the bands and thought that maybe I should just find someone else a little more promiscuous. Then this record finally dropped and it banged my brains out. Now I'm in love.

PUNCH – "Push Pull" LP (625 / Discos Huelga)
This is one of those bands that we all want to be in. Screamy female-fronted youth crew with a healthy portion of powerviolence? Yeah sign me up. This is the second self titled LP that PUNCH has put out, I don't know what's up with that but both are really fucking good. Great live band too. I just heard a story about a posi jump competition at a show a while back that PUNCH's guitarist Keeth won. The second place dude who told me the story had 11. Keeth did more than 40. Aren't straight edge kids great?

COFFINS/STORMCROW – split 12" (20 Buck Spin)
This split makes a lot of sense; both bands play a similar brand of doomy death metal with STORMCROW adding a gnarly crust flavor. The STORMCROW song is, I believe, the last material the band put out and I'm bummed that this incredible group is no more. At the end of their run they had gotten slower, crustier, and brutally heavy. COFFINS takes more showers but they might hate the world more. The two songs on their side are sonically fucking devastating.

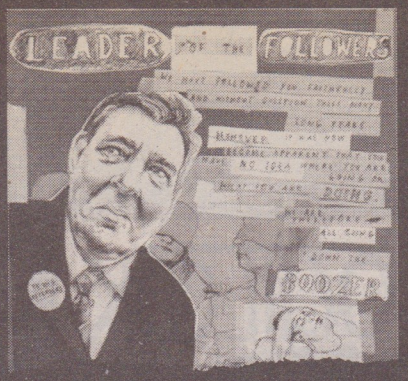
GRITAOMUERE/TROPIEZO – split CD (Cupachadistro / Subsistencia Distro / Discos de Hoy)
I don't know if there is a vinyl version of this CD but it's going on my LP list anyway. Both bands are great Spanish speaking hardcore from Latin/ South America. The GRITAOMUERE side is on some next level shit. The band is fast, brutal, and pissed. I found this split in the *MRR* demo box, which is a place that is overflowing with records that shouldn't have been made. When you find a gem like this in there it makes you forget about all those hipster laptop bands and ill-conceived noise projects you had to wade through to find it.

THE MAKAI – "Embracing the Shroud of a Blackened Sky" LP (Halo of Flies)
These dudes are homies of mine but the band is legitimately amazing. The record is one song that spills out onto the second side as well and is a crusty exploration of doom and death metal. There is a little something for every hesher on this record.

LANDMINE MARATHON – "Sovereign Descent" LP (Prosthetic Records, Deep Six Records)
This record might be a little too metal for *MRR* but the kids in this thrashy death metal band play punk shows and are pretty punkish so I contend they are a crossover band. This band features my favorite female metal vocalist. She gets raw on this one.

TOO MANY DAVES – "A Weekend at Dave's" LP (A.D.D.)
I picked a friend up from the airport coming back from Fest and she asked me if I knew about this side project involving the wonderful Davey Tiltwheel. She popped the CD in my stereo and I've been listening to it ever since. I'm listening to it right now. This is the best scumbag party punk record of the year with songs about legal troubles, fucking up, being a weird dude, and a cover of "Cop Killer." And everyone in the band is named Dave.

OAK – "ii" LP (A389)
This is a crushing doom record. There is pretty much nothing wrong with this band or this record. If you are not familiar, do yourself a favor and pick this shit up.



GEMMA GREENHILL

My 2010 Top Ten! In no particular order...

MARKED MEN – "The Other Side/On" (540)

Ok, let's just get this out of the way. I love this band. I love any of their bands before they were a band. I love any off-shoots of this band. And, I love everything I've heard its members create since they've been on hiatus. They won't be having too many more new releases (I don't think?), so the rarity of this phenomenon also comes into play... Me writing a top ten and leaving them out of it just wouldn't make sense. Oh, and by the way, it's awesome. So shouldn't that just be enough?

CHIN CHIN – "Sound of the Westway" LP (Slumberland/Mississippi)

I looked at this reissue for a while before buying it. Superficially, I judged that just from the cover alone I'd like it. But as "Chin Chin" is the name of multiple Chinese restaurants nationwide, I was unable to easily/too lazy to find that much out about them, so I stalled on buying. Then, one frivolous day, I parted with my $10 and proceeded to wonder why I'd procrastinated. Without wanting to over generalize, sometime I find girls doing more melodic punk way too sickly. But what I like about this album is that the sugar level is just right.

THE ARRIVALS – "Volatile Molotov" LP (Recess)

This album shows how these guys have grown so much since their debut. They are punks who write amazing genre crossing songs. They, and this album, are awesome.

POTENTIAL JOHNS – "Can I Really Not Go With You/Past Due" (Dirtnap)

POTENTIAL JOHNS, for those of you who don't know, is Jeff Burkes (of the MARKED MEN) solo project. Writing a complete onslaught of some of the best songs I've ever heard and playing every instrument at a skill level I can only dream of on all of his—bedroom recorded none the less—tracks will put this dude in any top ten of anything I ever have to come up with. The B-side of this 7" rules because A) you can actually hear the words Jeff is singing which, if you're familiar with his songs, you know that is rare. And B) you get to hear a little more of his experiments in layering drum tracks that (for the record, blows my mind) you begin to hear in a couple of songs on the last MARKED MEN record.

YOUNG OFFENDERS – "Leader Of the Followers" LP (Deranged)

This album starts off roaring and ceases to stop, leaving you almost panting for more after a way too brief eight tracks. I already got to review this, so I don't want to repeat myself, but this just might be my favorite album of 2010.

EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESION RING – "Rush To Relax" LP (Goner)

It took me a few years to really get this band. I saw them during 2007 in Memphis, and while everyone else creamed their knickers, I made fun of the singer's gloves. I tried their first couple of albums, and I just couldn't quite get into the slightly off centered vocal delivery and their drawn out rhythm riding that exceeded my two minute attention span. So, when they came here last summer, I wasn't really that bothered and considered it solely an opportunity to do what I do best—go out and drink with some buds. Even though the quality of their live sound was about as sharp as a banana, the band played as tight as one of Katy Perry's latex dresses. They were really fucking good. Having had a few drinks and remembering more of their songs than I'd thought, I ended up really enjoying myself, giving them a second chance and buying this album. It took a few listens to get how awesome this record really is. Yep, still undeniably that same band that I didn't quite get for three years, yet way more refined and reigned in than on their other full lengths. This elimination of raw touches within their, classically Australian, sound perfectly highlights their strength and progression as songwriters, displaying not only stellar compositions musically but some really clever and emotionally astute lyrics. Now, I'm not sure what I didn't like about this band in the first place, what the fuck was wrong with me?

MIND SPIDERS – "World's Destroyed" EP (Dirtnap)

The year was 1994. The venue was the NEC arena, Birmingham UK. The band was BLUR, the first real love of my life. The uniform of my teen years had me walking around looking like a fat, frizzy haired, female Damon Albarn. Kitted out in Adidas Campus, vintage t-shirts and track suit tops. I always have been, and always will be a sucker for some well executed pop: and this 7" is just that. A near perfect mix of powerpop and Telstar influences, this 7" was barely removed from the decks last Spring.

TOUCH ME NOTS – "Keep Talking Like That/ Hard To Forget" (Classic Bar Music)

I love this achingly pretty little 45. These tracks sound like they were written years ago, yet are in no way dated. A tuneful and skillfully written couple of songs that are a great example of local (Bay Area) music.

HOT NEW MEXICANS – LP (House Plant/ Recess)

I would never have listened to this record if I hadn't had to review it earlier in the year. I would've just (wrongfully) considered it "friend rock," the type of band I'd end up seeing at a show your mates or your mate's mates are playing, but not give them much thought otherwise. But, this record ended up really taking me a-back. Through skilled musicianship these guys expertly communicate a range of (what I heard to be) eclectic influences into a solid album of rock with a punk mentality. Just my cup of tea.

THE NOVICE – Demos CDR

For Christmas, a buddy of mine sent me a 20 song strong CDR of demos by THE NOVICE—the new, post POTENTIAL JOHNS, solo baby of Jeff Burke (MARKED MEN). A new moniker and at times a softer approach, that is still undeniably packed with irresistible melody, shows a new phase in songwriting for this bloody genius. It's safe to say it was the best Christmas gift I received. Even better than the slipper socks; sorry Mom.

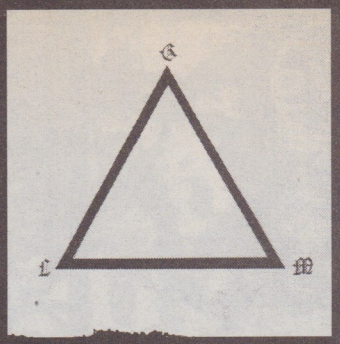
PACO MUS

TWELVE INCHES

FIRMEZA 10 – "El Grito de la Tierra" LP (Disco Autoproducido)

In my more than humble opinion FIRMEZA 10 is the best as far as primitive and inept hardcore goes. They can't really play. They don't have or need a bass player and they rarely have more than two chords in any of their songs. However they strongly believe in hardcore as protest music and manage to overcome any lack of technique with the belief on what they scream about. FIRMEZA 10's anarchist message over shit-not-music is by far the record that inspired me the most this year. *El Grito de la Tierra,* their second LP moves slightly from the punishing sound of their debut *Hardcore Radikal.* This time around they have some bass tone in the guitar and the general song writing has improved. The beat is still the same all way thru the record and the singing is mean and honest. The three solos (drums-guitar-vocals) of "Trastorno Mental", the last song of the record sums what a band with good intentions and no musical ability can achieve. On top of being a raging record the artwork is just as great. Silkscreen cover, hand stamped labels and two A3 xerox inserts with killer artwork.

KRIEGSHÖG – LP (La Vida es un Mus/H:G Fact)



I find the current wave of Japanese hardcore bands play some of the greatest hardcore these days. It seems like most of it has been coming out as 7"s and demos only, and although it is quite hard to write a good EP worth of material, writing an LP is a different thing all together. KRIEGSHÖG managed to record a monster of an LP that, although is nothing new in the sense that it is a ZOUO or SEXUAL inspired hardcore record, it defines their scene and their time quite well. Musically it moves away from the mega blown out recordings of their early output. Don't get me wrong, this record is as distorted and manic as everything the band did before but in this particular case the emphasis is on the bass playing. The entire record is so bass driven that it gets you carried away at first, not noticing the amazing guitar work it has next to it. The flow of the songs is flawless and the aggression comes mainly from the vocal delivery while the drumming is relentless and heavy on the bass. "Burn", the first song on side B deserves a special mention as my last year favorite and most played track according to my computer. Clocking in at 25 minutes the record leaves you wanting more. Sadly there won't be more, as this was KRIEGSHÖG's swansong. Visually the record artwork is immense. Gatefold paste on board sleeve. Cut and paste collage in high contrast black and white and pressed on 180 grm vinyl.

V/A – "Brutales Matanzas" LP (Cintas Pepe)
Punk from the "Third World" never tasted better than this Mexican / Peruvian compilation. A who's who of the new Mexican (and Peruvian) scene that in my opinion needs to get some well deserved praise since every record coming out from there has been amongst my most played records lately. This *masterpiece* comes housed in a fantastic cover art, which together with the crude silkscreen job on a flimsy card works as a sort of statement. I guess they could have got a heavier card for the sleeves but then the record wouldn't have the same effect. I hope the people responsible for putting El Fantomas (RIP), El Frijol and El Rubi on such a perfect artwork are aware of how many hours of laughs they brought me. Leaving the graphics behind and into the noise. Band after band they all make you want to sniff glue and piss from your window into this ugly world. LOS MARGARITOS, LOS MONJO, LOS NASSIS, RATAS DEL VATICANO, MORBO, INSERVIBLES, CRIMEN, MASTURBATOR, TRES AL HILO and KILLER CASSETTES all contribute some unreleased tracks to this comp, and unlike 99% of comps out there this days all the tracks are good. They go from the ultra low-fi hardcore of INSERVIBLES to the mongo punk of LOS NASSIS, from the ESKORBUTO flavored punk of LOS MONJO to the reverb drenched filthy punk of RATAS DEL VATICANO. The general vibe I get from this record involves the words delinquency, cheap drugs abuse, booze, boredom and overall *fun*. I bet the guys behind this record are still laughing after creating the greatest compilation to come out of Mexico since *Rock Nacional II: Solo Para Punks*. If you had any sense you'll track this record down at any cost. Beg, steal or kill in order to get this greatness. And whilst you are at it track down every other release by those bands because they are by far amongst the greatest bad music being released this days.

CRIMEN DE ESTADO / SUDOR – split LP (Mal Sonido)
CRIMEN DE ESTADO from Barcelona may as well have been in a time capsule since 1988. They carry the old Barcelona hardcore punk style torch with venom. The closest band that comes to mind is ANTI-DOGMATIKSS but I could list quite a few BCN or early Italian bands to compare them to, but I won't. Their side of the split rages extremely hard. Their sound is extremely urgent and is quite un-produced and raw. They are fast and their lyrics are acid and full of venom. SUDOR from Madrid sound more rockin' than their EP from last year. They still sound really stripped down and punk as fuck. Maybe more Scandinavian influenced than DISCHARGE as some people keep saying. Their side has a few mid tempo jams that with they un-produced recording make the sound raw and thick. Their lyrics are punk as fuck with a really juvenile attitude. The artwork is another beautiful wraparound silkscreen job with silkscreened labels in two colors (where do people find time to do such things!!!?) and xerox inserts. Totally DIY and cheap as fuck.

SPECTRES – "Last Days" LP (Whispers in Darkness)
I love everything this band has done so far (except their split 7" since I never got hold of it!—anyone?) I thought both their early EP's were really strong and memorable but a full length is a higher task. and in this case the result is more than excellent. SPECTRES song writing has grown and they have blended an incredible array of influences, most of them UK post punk, with the most tuneful peace punk to create an album that flows perfectly. It has the right amount of doom-ness, it is quite minimal and has got a huge personality. I could see this album pleasing people from many different musical backgrounds.

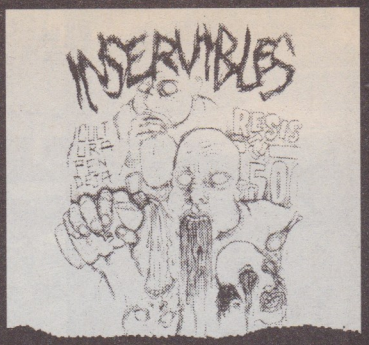
KAIBOUSHITSU – LP (H:G Fact)
KAIBOUSHITSU, named after the first song on STALIN's *Trash*, released an immense follow up to their first CD from two years ago. This mysterious psychedelic punk band drinks as much from the darkest bands of the ADK catalogue as they do from their singer's non-punk projects. As far as I know CROW's singer is one of the guys beyond KAIBOUSHITSU, but he is also behind DEATH COMES ALONG, from whom they got some influences. This is psychedelic and painful punk. A bleak and depressing record which grows on you, and I can see myself playing it repeatedly over the years. As a bonus the record artwork is beautiful, a monstrous image in mega high-contrasted black and white on a heavy stock paste on board sleeve.

RATAS DEL VATICANO – "Tiempos de Austeridad" one-sided LP (Captcha)
No-Fidelity punk from Monterrey. I have to admit I am a huge fun of these psychopaths and there is something about their macabre sense of humour that really reaches me. They definitely don't play just one style of punk. which usually is a minus in my book but they turn it into a plus. No matter what RATAS do they seem to always hit it on the head. Plenty of rippers amongst the fourteen tracks on this one sided LP, with a stupid etching on the flip side. As usual their cover art is next level good too.

STATE POISON – LP (Kick Rock/ Flower of Carnage)
I can't think of any other band that captures the late GAUZE sound like these French weirdos do in their debut album. After a seven inch of standard blown out noise hardcore last year they moved on into a thrashing hardcore mode that is highly addictive. Really energetic, fast and tight hardcore that brings to mind many Japanese hardcore bands from the golden era. The vocals are drenched in reverb at times and the way the singer vocalizes really reminds me of the last two GAUZE albums. The drumming is extremely manic and busy while the guitar has some crazy licks that somehow fall in place amongst all the chaos. Not sure how I feel about the artwork though. Somedays I love it some other days I think it is completely out of place.

WHITE BOSS – LP (Perennial)
Olympia's WHITE BOSS were a late discovery for me last year. I just heard them for the first time on the second to last gig of the DESTINO FINAL European tour while driving around Bordeaux trying to find the venue. The reigning silence in the van at that point, mixed with the WHITE BOSS soundtrack created a really tense and awkward atmosphere. This record is dense and intense, sounds loud and mean with the perfect balance between hardcore and drone. The riffs are menacing and deep and their whole sound is full and transmit you a sense of empowering that I can only imagine feeling in the middle of the forest pictured on their record cover. Extra points for equally powerful artwork.

TOP NINE SEVEN INCHES
GLAM – "Duelo de Titanes" EP (La Vida es un Mus)
What can I say? I released this record. One night I received one email from a band member letting me know they started the band and had recorded some tracks. Six minutes later we had agreed to do a record. There are



five minutes of intense hardcore aggression on this record, they are all so raging that they don't let you breath and by the time it is over you are knock out. Hard hitting no frills hardcore from Barcelona.

FOGNA – "Merda Come l'Oro" EP (Bat Shit)
If there was a band that freaked me out last year it was FOGNA. Out of nowhere came this CD-R turned EP that I could not stop talking about and playing to people for the last part of the last year. Not afraid of using a drum machine. This duo from what I believe is a small town in Sicily locked themselves in a room with a cheap drum machine and an array of guitar effects of which flanger was the most prominent and recorded a six song demo which lies somewhere between WRETCHED from who they take the singing style and the pace, and CONTROPOTERE who they borrow some of the inspiration for both intro and outro on a landscape made of what sounds like early industrial drones and horror soundtracks. Scary at times, the theme of the record is extremely anti-organized religion and overall it works as a conceptual work where music, lyrics and artwork all make sense.

CRAZY SPIRIT – "Burning Churches" EP (Toxic State)
In my mind CRAZY SPIRIT are some sort of GERMS meets PSYCHIC TV type of sect. I don't know what the fuck is going on with these kids but they definitely have their own thing going on, and that's something 99% of bands lack these days. Each song has screechy rat sounding vocals over manic double snare hits on every beat, which sounds quite different to my ears. Their songs are messy but not extremely chaotic and the overall vibe is the sound of disorganized mess made music. The presentation also stands up, a silkscreened envelope with a poorly folded (and rarely fitting in the envelope) double side insert with some crazy mindbending artwork. Overall CRAZY SPIRIT is one of the greatest discoveries of the year.

KE SE MUERAN – "Histeria Katracha" EP (Self-released)
I want to think this is a contemporary Honduras hardcore record. End of history. For peace of mind if you are in the band, know someone in the band or got some light to shed about this record hit me up.

ILEGAL – "Error De Orden" EP (Lengua Armada)
Illegal immigrants living in Canada and unleashing a perfect blend of BGK's *White Male Dumbinance* 7", ANTI-DOGMATIKKS *Rompan Filas* demo and NEGAZIONE *Tutti Pazzi* 7" that is out of control raging. Amazing follow up to their demo and in the same league as OTAN, ABSURDO or CRIMEN DE ESTADO in the sense that they don't only get the musical influences but the politics ones too.

LOS MONJO – "Mexicanos al Grito de Mierda" EP (Solo Para Punks)
OK, ESKORBUTO are probably my all time favorite punk band. Over the years I got sick of hearing bands that supposedly sound like the Santurzi trio. Finally these young Mexican lads come along and release record after record of Eskorbution perfection. This their third EP took me longer to get into that the previous ones but it is grew on me. The tittle track, while being a mock on the Mexican National anthem has the same qualities to became a punk anthem the way "Mucha Policia, Poca Diversion" was.

VIPER – "Commiting the Seven Deadly Sins" EP (540)
Boston occultist hardcore. Highly influenced by ZOUO and GISM. Burly and fuzzed out like no one else. It is actually their demo tape on vinyl but it is so good it deserves the high praise.

INSERVIBLES – "Triguena" EP (Shogun)
I could really have chosen any of the three seven inches INSERVIBLES released last year but this is by far the one I played the most and although it is a demo recording from 2008 it wasn't until last year that it finally got out there properly. INSERVIBLES' own brand of hardcore sums up quite well what otherwise may be known as shit-fidelity. They are ferocious and nasty, their lyrics are full of acid and their recording is raw and filthy to the point where I have to wonder if it was recorded inside a garbage can. Anyway, regardless of how filthy the recording may be the songs are really strong and the sound only adds more charm and character to a flawless release. How on hell can they write songs like "Risa de Puta" without having a square in their city named after the band?

HYGIENE – "Recruitment" EP (Going Underground)
I wasn't sure if I was gonna get this record in 2010 but a really well dressed gentleman brought it to me at Christmas dinner, a mere few days before the year ended. Hence the inclusion on this list. HYGIENE recorded this tracks at the same time as their previous EP and I remember listening to the recording back then and thinking that this was their strongest material to date. This three jangling guitar tunes show us the more upbeat side of the band especially my favourite HYGIENE song, "29 Bus" an ode to the so urban activity of using the public transport on the Wood Green to Trafalgar Square route.

BRYONY BEYNON

Away with the usual "Wah wah this was so hard" hogwash, I can happily state that apart from things I somehow didn't get around to hearing (quite a lot), these are the punkular products that stood out for me this year. I have made a starkly unprofitable writing career of being a jerk about bad bands, and it's fair to say positivity is certainly not the train I got on to get here, so with that said when I lay compliments down, it's cos something damn straight rules. That should explain how good I consider the audio selections below to be. Perhaps there is a bias towards UK bands here, but hopefully my 2011 end of year list (if I don't get fired!) can legitimately be all UK bands, as I feel like compared to this time last year we have a real strong new component of exciting new DIY punk bands of all styles that will hopefully release things for your ears, and I'm so stoked to be a part of it! In no particular order, here are 10 7" and 10 LPs from 2010, and as a bonus you've got top five demos, live sets and zines at the end. Blam.

7"s

ARCTIC FLOWERS – "Slouching Towards Bethlehem" EP (Self Released)
It's all too easy to proffer the "It's all been done" excuse for a lack of spark and originality in songwriting, and these days plenty do get by playing someone else's riffs backwards and scowling a bit. It's a welcome relief, then, to be floored by the (re)inventiveness of a band like AF, who have taken the coolest aspects of the UK-Anarcho template (seriously yanks.. "peace punk"?!) some Christian Death vibes and a dash of jangly UK post-punk, embellishing it brilliantly to make something updated and fresh. It's driving and discontented hardpunk that's buzzing with gloomth. *Wyld* riffs. I was dingdongdevastated when I managed to miss their live appearance at Chaos in Tejas, and this record is a firm favourite. Await the LP with impatience!

MEN'S INTEREST – "More War" EP (Home Invasion)
Transcending the now well-worn clichés of both er, mystery and guys, by sheer virtue of being great, this is grimly uncompromising hardcore that sits two steps higher than most bands operating today, but then with personnel including an ex-COLD SWEAT member on vocal duties, this is perhaps unsurprising. Their 7" progresses somewhat from the demo (which I had somewhere, then lost, then found and have now apparently re-lost) with some cool dynamics and is generally more pummelling, somehow snottier too. Deadlift your mind.

GLAM – "Duelo de Titanes" EP (La Vida es un Mus)
I imagine this is on most people's list, but oh well. I had already agreed to do a show for GLAM before hearing their record, which is perhaps testament to how easily trusting I am, but luckily when I finally did hear the record it blew me, and everyone with in a reasonable distance, clean away. Yes, Barca punx do the distort. I believe they are planning a European tour now, too. I hope you got this when you had the chance. Crank it up (Really high.)

NEON BLUD — "Whipps" EP (Fan Death)
Yeah the demo itself technically came out at the tail end of last year, but who cares when the tunes are this wyld. Freak out fuzz, barbed feedback, super catchy disaffected but engaging lady vocals. With that opening track coming over like an answerphone message phoned in from purgatory, all the way through to contender for the coolest song of the year "Sophomore Blud" that has this totally urgent BORN AGAINST feel. Being the errant philistine that I am I have found their subsequent LP *B Girl'* less immediately appealing, but it's a progression that is still welcome from restless Floridian genii. This is a perfect record for me, on the perfect format, and is only made moreso by the arty scrawled liner and lovely screened sleeves. Yum.

NERVESKADE – "Insanity / Forced To Live" (Iron Lung Records)
Aaaaghwh hwh wghwwghwwwwaahhhhhw aahhh FORCEDTOLIVEFORCEDTOLIVEEE EE EEAAA Aaaaaaaagahhhhwaahahhhh hbuzz zzzzzzzzzzzzsfsg ssjjsgsgjdgg ah wwwahhha ahhh ahhh ahhhhh ahhhrghhhFUCK.

HYGIENE – "Recruitment" EP (Going Underground)
I don't know if it's cheating to include a band whose records you've previously released, but I didn't have a hand in this one and its ruddy marvellous. Technically Hygiene had two records out this year, one of which was the La Vida es un Mus Record store day (every day, duhhh) effort, which included that widely marmite (as in "You either love it or you hate it") cover of the HUMAN LEAGUE "Things that dreams are made of." I've chosen this most recent record for the list as it includes songs I'm pretty sure they played the first time I saw them, along with new material, that sound equally fresh now. Yet again, I love this band because they plow multiple furrows at once to make something entirely their own, although the bucolic turn of phrase is entirely inappropriate for a band that makes me feel like a Brutalist tower block. There's that "UKDIY" sound colliding with a frenetic buzz and scree like THE FALL, it's understated and funny and clever and cool. Haters be damned, this band are musing on a higher plain of thought and are one of the best around, as their new LP will absolutely prove.

HARBOUR – "Gwalia Deserta" EP (Carry the Weight)
Welsh-speaking would-be-kings from back home making solid, creative hardcore, and with zero regard for today's bandwagons. The focus on actual songs and more than two-ideas-and-a-breakdown per tune is nothing new for personnel involved here, but previous bands have garnered even less attention than HARBOUR's continued lack of limelight. The release of this record by a label with some dude-bro-dude clout will hopefully change that. Sonically they pick up that more …layered DC hardcore vibe (I'm thinking IGNITION, ONE LAST WISH) and run for the hills with it, bringing in some stop-start dynamics and introducing a sense of "space" in their songs, without ever getting "epic." (Euw.) The bleakly poetic (without being cheesy) lyrics and a vocal delivery that's strained, propulsive and ultimately believable are the real clincher here, taking it from a cool release worth a second listen to something above and beyond that. Bow down.

CRAZY SPIRIT – "Burning Churches" EP (Toxic State)
Oh come on, I wasn't *not* going to, was I? Actually I did deliberate about including this record because it came into my hands very late at the end of the year and there's a niggly feeling that all in all they may get enough play in other people's top tens, but fuck it. This record's really great, it looks how I wish all records looked, with an enveloped physicality that makes me think I could trace the various member DNA through an examination of it its septic, slightly diseased hardcore that's way fun to listen to and the singer sounds like Darby shitting Crash. Come on indeed.

WETDOG – "Lower Leg" EP (Angular / Captured Tracks)
Absolute brainworm of a single from a band that still resolutely refuse to answer my interview questions. Either that or their PR thinks I'm a clown. I am being very mature and not letting either of those things stand in the way of this record, so much do I love it. Dance punk vibes (early-noughties style when it was still a lil ferocious) meets that riot-grrl inflected posh-accent chanted vocals ("ohhwa-ohhwa") and sneaky robotic post punk. DJ Tiesto somehow remixed their song, too, what the fuck right? Didn't like the LP quite as much, but this band rules. They're coming to the US in Spring too so don't say I didn't warn you.

BRAIN F — "Restraining Order / God No" (Static Shock Records)
Despite already knowing these recordings pretty well due to the Raleigh — London connection, I was worried this record wouldn't be able to make it into the list due to the very end of December release date, argh! Thankfully fears were allayed and joy ensued. Describing Brain F's sound (I don't know why they dropped the "lannel" either) one is a difficult thing, the band/label say "when X (US), X (Australia), TEENGENERATE and *Messthetics* collide" and while I can see the elements from each, the tunes here are all their own. Nick's guitar playing has a scrappy force to it, Elise's lazy yet somehow persistently belligerent drawl is really quite signature, and both songs are quite worthy of the A-side in their catchiness. I could sing this record to you now and I've not listened to it for a couple of days. The production is lo-fi without being annoying, and a good mastering job (by Joe at Subsequent) ensured that the different recording sessions isn't obvious. They'll have a new record out on Grave Mistake soon, so get this one now!

TOP TEN LPs
SONSKULL – "Birth Scene/Rewind" LP (Perennial Death)
Was this technically a 12"EP? Fugg it. SONSKULL is part of the latest crop of awesome new Olympia groups making unpindownable punk, and this record blows me away every listen. I guess some early SONIC YOUTH type riffs, zen BIKINI KILL vibes with snarly let's-get-high-energy female vocals that are occasionally joined by equally cool and expressive backups. It feels organic and unforced and naturally p-u-n-k. I was truly blindsided by this record, hopefully it's had enough attention by now that these aren't stock piled at Perennial HQ, because that would be a bloody crime. Best song: "Boston Girls"

TRASH KIT – LP (Upset the Rhythm)
A trio of women percolating tribal riddims through seismic cymbals and a gaggle of oohs, aahs and when you least expect WAARGGGHs, this band is the master of the bass-driven build up. They have a sense of magical space within in their songs that comes over with all the power of a punk rock possibility explosion inherent in the music of bands like the RAINCOATS, and one of their singers possesses something like that distinct Ana de Silva alto timbre. "We ride the Megabus / We're all famous now" has to be one of the best lines written about being a DIY band in the UK. TRASH KIT have played ATPs and all sorts, so I don't know what offers might be on the table for them, but whatever they might do next, this is a band that can really write songs and I hope they do more of that in 2011. Best Song: "Filipino Song"

DESKONOCIDOS – "En La Oscuridad" LP (Todo Destruido / Trabuc)
Recent Euro-visitors with VAASKA, they didn't

come to the UK and I was sad. A full length laden with totally seductive melodrama vibes counteracted by that urgent rageoid delivery, I hear a more blown-out RUDI PENI. One of those records that sits there demanding to be played because you've still got that hook half in your head from the last time your spun it. People have told me it sounds like deathrock, I will admit to being less than educated in that area so I can also thank *En La Oscuridad* for helping me prize open the trapdoor to that world of righteous sonic spook. Best song: "¿Por Que?"

NU SENSAE — "TV, Death and the Devil" LP (Nominal)
Well, I'm a fan of all three of those things. This was the first record I got to review for *MRR* this summer, but I only recently got a hold of my own copy thanks to peripatetic punk lord Sean, who has put out legions of brilliant Vancouver based bands, NU SENSAE being no exception. A great LP of super stripped-down bass-and-lady-vocals primal gloomth. Playing this record feels like crawling into a comfy dark place, as I did so daily this winter. Thanks, NU SENSAE. Best Song: "I'm a Body."

YOUNG OFFENDERS – "Leader of the Followers" LP (Deranged)
I've loved this band from the moment I heard them, and their 12" is a great hit in this house (in the kitchen, mostly, perfect chopping music.) Along with AIRFIX KITS, this band have the interesting status of being (mostly) Bay Areans that are, thanks to shared interests and at least one ex-pat, making punk rock with a post-punk edge, and in YA's case nearly-Oi nods that have this distinctly British feel. Saying that, the best comparisons I can draw listening to it now are to MINUTEMEN and MISSION OF BURMA, so what do I know. Deliriously catchy, off-beat, non-obvious vocal patterns *Leader of the Followers* is direct and gutsy and just super evocative and affecting in a way they would probably cringe at me saying so. It comes across somehow honest, but fun without ever being throwaway—echoes of real lives lived and observations on how to live them being made, rather than just lyrics based on shit thrown or the purely hypothetical, as so many less balding, less awesome bands might be content with. I am sad that they will never tour the UK but so glad that they exist. Best Song: "Regret/Repeat."

CROWD CONTROL – "Modern Bullshit" LP (Self Released)
A quality LP of reverb-drenched hardcore punk from this hardworking Irish band that I very much enjoyed listening to this year. This rabid beast of a full-length displays nine songs of absolutely livid hardcore *punk* that somehow blends infinite moshability with seriously weight, snatches of almost Clevo-style riffs are pounded by grubby and unrelenting BASTARD-esque drums, all covered with miserabilist world-swallowing vocals. It's low on frills and high on reverb, and the lyrics are devastatingly simple and direct, keeping you resolutely outside your comfort zone. The cover of the record has an image of a barren planet on it. Suffice to say, this is the soundtrack to destroying that place and everything in it. Best Song: "Cokehead"

DOUBLE NEGATIVE – "Daydreamnation" LP (Sorry State)
Another brilliant effort from these assured veterans, once again assisted by flawless, some might say brilliant label Sorry State. Honest opinion? Brilliant. Best Song: "Saturation Tank."

NUCLEAR FAMILY – (Loud Punk)
I initially wrote that it's the totally killer kinda unique female vocals on this record make it what it is, but I have to rectify that and say that the awesome spikily forceful yet melodic songwriting is probably up there in the formula too. This record is also very well(but not over-)produced, just FYI. Every song on there is too hummable, I have no idea how Jen reaches those notes live but I have such faith in the quality of this band that when they play I'm sure there's not a warble in sight! Best Song: "Believer's Voice Of Victory."

EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING – "Rush to Relax" LP (Goner)
I love EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING with a vigour that occasionally troubles me, but hey. This record was a great moment in their oeuvre if ya will, perhaps not their finest full length yet all in all, but without a doubt one of the most "album-like" compositions of the year. It saw a movement into more long-n-winding type songs without trailing off anywhere unpalatable, and all this set right against some of their fastest bangers yet. A band so very fun and easy to listen to, they once again made a record to come back to again and again. Best Song: "Isn't It Nice."

MOB RULES – LP (Zandor)
When try-hard is a compliment. MOB RULES do indeed try hard. They have been taking industrious approach to making heavy downtuned hardcore punk in this country for a number of years now, and continue to impress. This, their first full length, took a good while in the making but it plays through as a truly impressive, thick sounding mélange of mess and hate. Galling and upsetting hardcore that approaches the often suggested noiserock sensibilities only really through being so bass-led. This is in reality far more about updating the spirited claustrophobia of the Ginn-esque riff and fronting it with one of those marauding, blustering maniacs, one fit for today's troubling times. Having set the (white) bar higher than ever for bands from this doubty island, by doing an LP and doing it properly, I can only hope they go on to gain recognition not as "the UK's answer to…insert forgettable American equivalent" but as an entity in themselves, which they absolutely are. Best Song: "Really Clean."
Ok, that's taken me about a thousand years, so here I have opted to reflect both the brevity and brilliance of the demonstration cassette by limiting myself with to a rubbish Haiku on each of these totally-not-rubbish 2010 Demos.
TOP FIVE DEMO TAPES
WEIRD TV – G-L-O-R-I.. A Dangerhouse espanol excellent brat vibes.
WOOLF – South London witches lesbian no wave coven screaming lover noise.
THE BOSTON STRANGLER – Find construction gloves steal POISON IDEA riffs do big chain slamdance.
SHOPPERS – Syracuse girls boys blown out queer indie punk joy so damn exciting.
THE SAUCE Oi not jobs super group fucked up SHITTY LIMITS HYGIENE TRASH TALK. *What?*

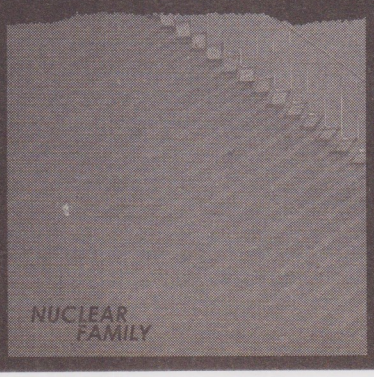
And Finally —
TOP FIVE SHOWS
DESTINO FINAL — The Victoria, London — Without a doubt the best live band I have seen this year, and apparently this wasn't even their best show on the tour. Ridiculous.
EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING — Sugar Mountain, Oakland — What can you really say? If this band doesn't come to the UK year, I will kill myself.
WALLS — Emo's Inside, Austin — So, so intense, the singer's presence in this band, all predatory and stranger danger, was one of the most believable I saw this year. I truly dread to think about the fuck this man didn't give.
BASTARD — Emos Outside, Austin — BASTARD.
FACEL VEGA — TOUR (Various venues, UK) This band from South Wales now via Leeds, UK, make deeply unfashionable propulsive and melodic punk that mixes up stuff like RITES OF SPRING with the verve of bands like HEROIN or ANTIOCH ARROW, whilst totally *not* being screamo, before you even suggest such a thing. We were lucky enough to do a short tour together that was blighted by bad luck but still too much fun and a genuine privilege. Mind-bendingly tight as a result of playing together since mid-teens, FACEL VEGA's live performances are truly a sight to behold, and I hope they get to play more in 2011. Look 'em up.

ROBERT COLLINS

EPs
TALK IS POISON – "Rage To Infinity" EP (self-released)
I'm not sure what still needs to be said about this band, this was their first record in nearly a decade, and they are still the best.

CROW – "Vertigo/Occupied Japan" (Prank)
This turned out to be their last record, and it is a total killer. Since reforming in the late '90s, CROW just got better and better, and the guitar work is face melting to the extreme.

CONFINES – "Withdrawn" EP (Side Two)
I was sold before the intro to the first song was done.



ICE NINE – "Nobody's Son" EP (Prank)
One of the most overlooked bands from the '90s reformed and made one of the most overlooked records of 2010. This is earnest, angry and intense.

VACCINE – "Human Hatred" EP (Painkiller)
One of the angriest records of the year.

LOW THREAT PROFILE – "Kick My Heart" EP (Deep Six)
Talked about forever, and totally worth the wait. This ex-INFEST/NO COMMENT band is every bit as devastating as the pedigree implies.

SOCIETY NURSE – "Junk Existence" EP (Iron Lung)
Discordant and disconcerting hardcore.

RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA – "Huellas de Odio" EP (Heart First)
Can you imagine raw Spanish language HC played lightning fast with brutal female vocals and Japanese influenced riffage? Clearly RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA can.

RAYOS X – "Mi Desorden" EP (Lengua Armada)
The crop of raw punk bands that has surfaced in the last couple of years has produced several great bands, and finally two of them made it to wax. I love the TUBERCULOSIS record as well, but I keep coming back to the hopelessly catchy tunes on this EP.

OK? – "Hope for a Solution/Laissez Faire" (Life's A Rape)
Blatantly aping '80s UK anarcho punk is a bold move, and will inevitably lead to unflattering comparisons…unless you do it this well.

LPs
NUCLEAR FAMILY – LP (Loud Punk)
Perfectly delivered female fronted hardcore punk.

V/A–"Nagoya City Hardcore" LP (Prank)
Heaps of killer Japanese hardcore came out this year, but there's something about this comp of Nagoya bands (issued on vinyl after a CD release in 2009, so maybe it's cheating a bit). CLOWN, D-CLONE, ZILEMMA, DEMOLITION and more, all awesome.

VAASKA – "Ruido Hasta le Muerte" LP (540)
So, you like to listen to raw and ferocious Texas DISCHARGE worship? Might I suggest VASSKA?
DESKONOCIDOS – "En La Obscuridad" LP (Trabuc)
It's like goth punk, but faster and better. Goth hardcore? I still haven't filed this record, it just stays in the "to be listened to" stack, because it always needs to be listened to. It will remain there for quite a while.

ACEPHALIX – "Aporia" LP (Prank)
It's more metal than crust, but it's dirtier than ENTOMBED…plus it's got hooks. Addictive riffs on a blackened curst record? Yeah, and that's why this rules.

CALL ME LIGHTNING – "When I'm Gone My Blood Will Be Free" LP (Dusty Medical)
Light years away from most of the hardcore on my list(s), CALL ME LIGHTNING make rock with amazing '80s new wave hooks, and they do so flawlessly. Their third full length is near perfect from start to finish, the kind that you just keep listening to all day. For another list, perhaps, but this band has one of the best drummers ever.

WHITE LUNG – "It's The Evil" LP (Deranged)
It's just good…like, really good.

THE BASTARD NOISE – "A Culture Of Monsters" LP (Deep Six)
Wood with a bass in his hand, enough said. Other Wordly // Skull Servant // Masterpiece.

GAS CHAMBER – LP (Warm Bath)
This Buffalo band might have only created a small blip on the hype-o-meter, but this 12" is a total mind fuck powerviolence juggernaut.

HERÅTYS – LP (Not Enough)
I've heard several people say that this is like TOTALITÄR reincarnated. Perhaps that is an exaggeration…but perhaps not.

LIVE –
TALK IS POISON @ Broken Neck, Austin, TX
FREE RADICALZ @ Submission, SF, CA
THE BASTARD NOISE @ Emo's, Austin, TX
MORPHEME @ Emo's, Austin, TX
LA VOZ @ backyard, South Central Los Angeles
NERVESKADE @ Lipo Lounge, SF, CA
TUBERCULOSIS @ Eastside Café, El Serreno, CA
NECRO HIPPIES @Thrillhouse, SF, CA
MATA MATA @ Raw Ponx Compound, Lynwood, CA
YADOKAI @ The Swamp, Oakland, CA

DEMOS –
NEON PISS (San Francisco, CA)
(My single favorite new band of 2010.)
BELLICOSE MINDS (Portland, OR)
WHITE WARDS (Olympia, WA)
STREET LEGAL (Kansas City, MO)
VERRATERISCH (Sacramento, CA)
ROSENKOPF (New York City)
COLD DEATH (Germany)
GRAVE BOUND (Chattanooga, TN)
KROMOSOM (Australia)
RAT DAMAGE (Sacramento, CA)
KROMOSOM (Australia)
RAT DAMAGE (Sacramento, CA)

JESS SCOTT

This year the UK and Olympia have paired as excellent slices of bread to the punk / fuzzy pop sandwich of 2010. Reissues have been a bit sparser than the last couple of years, but man did those who re-fired their cannons make a hole through the contemporary landscape. Long out-of-print vinyl leisurely bought at reasonable prices again, new bands crushing the end of a decade with demo cassettes, British kids reclaiming their throne to their DIY-pop ancestral heritage, and a book posing as a fanzine that hits a new bar in what true dedication to music looks like. Even LA contributed hits. There is so much more from 2010 that I'm excited to hear, but here is some stuff that monopolized my time for the better part of it. In no order...total chaos!

PROPER ORNAMENTS – Recalling/Are You Going Blind? (Make-A-Mess)
Much like James' associated groups, VERONICA FALLS and SEXY KIDS, this single makes your jaw drop at the possibilities of songwriting and recording shining with pure talent. VIC GODARD, ORANGE JUICE, BEATLES-educated and armed with clever lyrics, this is the cream of the pop underground of today. Oh, and I've heard the demos for a distant-coming long-player, as well...feel as though I've got the blueprints for The Bomb or something, it's so exciting to know what fun lays around the corner.

CHIN CHIN – "Sound of the Westway" LP (Slumberland)
I was surprised there wasn't more of a hurrah for this around town. I am blown away by the musicianship above all, classically trained ears reaching for pop, punk girl-fury birthed from '70s rebellion; this is a sleeper classic and it seems the reissue might have been too? Or maybe you all play this record everyday also, and we just don't talk about it? For kids who play USCH and the ADVERTS back to back. Long live CHIN CHIN, swelling to the throne of post-punk history.

WEIRD TV – demo tape (self-released)
Everyone wishes there was a WEIRD TV in their town. Everyone is jealous Olympia gets to go over to a house and see this band play all the time like it was nothing. All WTV members greatly contribute to pushing this music over the edge, but Lizet's instinctive punk vocal delivery and the atmosphere it creates is something that will reinvigorate any lazy punk floundering around in The Meaning of Life. Their quarterly-ish *NUTS!* 'zine is not to be missed either.

VERONICA FALLS – "Beachy Head/Staying Here" (No Pain in Pop)
This seven-inch may be long gone and now this recommendation acts as one of those mean told-you-so reviews. If so, I apologize. Best UK Single of the Year in my humble book. "Beachy Head" hit us all over the back of the skull, what you could do with a few friends and free weekend. I remember Kate Hall saying "I'm just so scared they'll never write anything that good again." I knew her feeling of anxiety when a band seems to ceaselessly fill every gap in the pop sensibilities and possibilities of today. CLOUDS, MEAT WHIPLASH, and the like, get running. Peering down from great heights, I hear an LP is working its way through the birth canal, a beautiful bouncing baby collection of hits, I

anticipate.

GUN OUTFIT – "Possession Sound" LP (PPM)
Most underrated band of the decade award? I can't believe people aren't slicing G.O. tattoos into their third eye after they see this band play. Carrie and Dylan's vocals trade seamlessly while the record speeds forth, each song relentless, necessary rhythms like an animal feeding. Crummy feelings embraced and dissipated like a dose of HUSKER DU or X. Just when you thought there wasn't any more room, GUN OUTFIT stand like giants this year.

DOLLY MIXTURE – "Demonstration Tapes" 2xLP (Germs of Youth)
All hail adorable pop nerds who had to brave it in the world before the PASTELS. Clever and joyous, a strong hand in their own image, songwriting, recording, and self-releasing of records, DOLLY MIXTURE set the bar for indie, for pop, and for girls joining with their best friends for something to do. Limited to 300, as the band hand signed each cover, I'm sure someone is itching to bootleg this stateside?

MILK MUSIC – "Beyond Living" LP (Self-released)
The time is now wasted creatures! The twelve-inch that would've saved your sorry teenage skull has arrived, and in the spirit of Olympia's wave of ripping guitar insanity, cloaked in the Northwest fury that we're so stoked on in SF, Milk Music have delivered an EP that feels like the sky is literally falling. "Beyond Living" dropped my jaw when I watched it live, Alex's howl heroically channels new galaxies with buzzed-out low-end guitars acting as their space stations. I keep using HUSKER DU as a touchstone for attempting to translate the innovation coming out of Olympia right now, and though you'd never get these guys mixed up with GUN OUTFIT musically, the energy runs through the veins of their music in a similar spell-casting way as the DU and their talented neighbors from the North. "Out of My World" is like an aural incarnation of the leaping free fall this band takes you on, all your other records back on land, comfy on your shelf, and a new world of music is miles below. It's going fast, grab it before you finish reading this sentence.

BLACK TAMBOURINE – "Black Tambourine" LP (Slumberland)
This collection of songs is essentially a reissue of their previous CD entitled *Complete Recordings*, but now features original demo versions and newly recorded covers including a ferociously gaze-y version of Suicide's "Dream Baby Dream." While largely ignored in their brief existence, this collection has now topped the Best of lists, from blog log to the *New York Times*. These suburban Maryland fans of British fuzz like the JESUS AND MARY CHAIN and 14 ICED BEARS were arguably the sole American band to shore up such a tidal wave of UK indie pop bands churning out single after single in the '80s/early '90s. Supreme vocalist Pam Berry's singing is possibly the most hauntingly dreamy effort ever put forth during that decade's onslaught of bands attempting distorted pop perfection. A blueprint for generations to come, this is beyond essential it is absolutely compulsory.

LA LA VASQUEZ – "Buoy" EP (M'Lady)
Brighton, England's pop trio LA LA VASQUEZ present four tracks for your total enjoyment. Triple vocals, frolicking snares, bouncing bass, and a pop-tweaked guitar rushes the listener back to the best of their country's late '70s Rough Trade singles. The girls write lots of love letters to LES CALAMITES, DELTA 5 and/or Y PANTS, and reinvent this education into their own grappling for an authenticity to call their own. I wish San Francisco had one a these, too! If a youth music revolution over a cup of tea sounds nice to you, spin this 'round for days.

DUNES – "Old Souls" EP (Art Fag Recordings)
DUNES are the sound of gothic urges from well-adjusted punks, cooly sliding above what much of the L.A. music scene has to offer. Featuring Kate Hall from MIKA MIKO, Stephanie Chan from FINALLY PUNK, and Mark Greshowak from TALBOT TAGORA; that will give you absolutely no compass for trekking DUNES territory. Rather, a magnet cast towards classic-era 4AD Records, the CHAMELEONS, or MICROFILM might get you closer. Their 12"debut went quickly, so don't lag!

NEONATES – demo tape (split with Pussy Patrol) (self-released)
Three-piece DIY damage also from Los Angeles. Close bedroom bonding with, and studying of THE PETTICOATS, HANS-A-PLAST, and SLEEPING DOGS creates a succinct plan of attack. A lot of crap that managed to look like something I might like came out this year, and having this tape reconnected me with what I was searching for. They've also got a cool 'zine I hear is due out sometime that includes interviews with STEF PETTICOAT and THE BAGS. And there seems to be a single planned on England's SEX IS DISGUSTING.

TYVEK – "Demos" tape (Fag Tapes)
I guess this is just demos of the *Nothing Fits* LP (In The Red), but it's all I have, so here it is. TYVEK seems to be an endless well of ideas for new tunes dragged outta SST heaven and into the hearts of kids who want to fling around in a dark cube with their friends. And who wouldn't, with the sweeping hooks of TOY LOVE and the impatience of the FASTBACKS or SIN 34 there's little left to wish for. It's almost a shame that Kevin writes so many great songs, I think people can start to take for granted the raw immediacy and pure fun exploding time after time from these punk jammers. The sounds on this tape are muddy and desperate, and they've been playing for months on end in my deck.

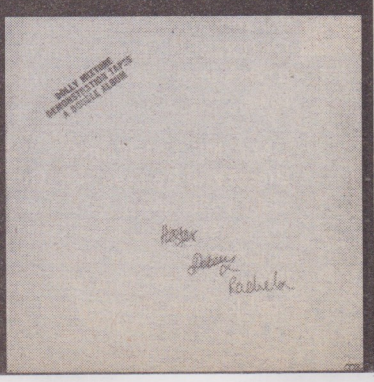
CAROLYN KEDDY

2010 was another great year for music. There are so many more records that could have made this list. I wish I could have fit them all in, but I guess other people need some space for their lists too.

LPs
EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING – "Rush To Relax" LP (Goner)
This is a perfect album. Really. There is not one song I would cut or skip over. Even though the first time I heard "Gentleman" I thought it was a bit corny, but in a nice and funny way. After millions of times of hearing it since, it is one of my favorite songs. I remember reading reviews of this record where various writers were bitching that EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING recorded this in only six hours and that the band should have taken more time or some other nonsense. Why? This is record is just too good. If a band can get this many amazing songs down in six hours why do they need to take longer? Nothing ruins a recording session more than musicians jerking off for hours. Just look at KEITH RICHARDS or any other classic rock dinosaur. Plus these guys are amazing live. I saw them three nights in a row and on the fourth night I wished they were playing again. So good.

TY SEGALL – "Melted" LP (Goner)
I am constantly amazed at the talent TY SEGALL has. Segall manages to make his songs continually sound fresh and exciting. It is basically the same fuzzed out, pop garage stuff he has always been playing, but the songwriting keeps getting better. My favorite song is "Finger" an anthemic, noisy, distorted, grunge-garage mixture.

GUINEA WORMS – "Sorcerers of Madness (4rd Year In A Row!)" 2xLP (Columbus Discount)
A double LP complied from twelve CDrs submitted when Columbus Discount



requested to do an album of Guinea Worms songs. Demented and weird, but extremely funny. So catchy, but when you find yourself singing along you try not to think about what you're actually singing. I pretty much went to Gonerfest this year to see GUINEA WORMS. Of course, I justified it with the fact that I had never been to Gonerfest before plus all these other great bands that I love were playing too. But the truth is I went to see GUINEA WORMS. It was worth it.

DRUGS DRAGONS – LP (Dusty Medical)
When I reviewed this record for MRR a couple of months ago I was having a hard time coming to grips with what I liked about it. My reasoning on paper sounds so wrong. Each song starts off with what seems like a well-known classic rock riff, but then gets knocked off that path and goes into some weird space. The singer has an amazingly deep, gruff voice that I could listen to for hours. Every time I put this record on I like it more and more. It is heavy rock and the lyrics are really dumb, but the songs are oddly addictive.

JOHN WESLEY COLEMAN – "Bad Lady Goes To Jail" (Goner)
The track that sucked me in on this one was "Get High Babe." It is pretty unassuming, but there is something very catchy about it. After my first listen to the album, I just played that one song over and over again. When I was finally sated, I plunged into the whole album. I haven't been able to stop. Fuzzy, bluesy garage punk. Great laid-back vocals too.

HANK IV – "III" LP (Siltbreeze)
Hank IV take pride in the fact that they've been on the scene long enough to know what's what. They should. They're more pissed off and they rock harder than a lot of the youngsters starting bands today. I appreciate that. They infuse classic punk with more experimental sounds of '80s college rock and the vilified garage punk bands of the '90s. It's primitive, guttural and unbridled. I thought they'd have a hard time improving on 2008's Refuge In Genre. In this case I don't mind being wrong.

HEARTBEEPS – "My Bones Are Tattooed" LP (Dead Beat)
Raw and rough garage punk from Bordeaux, France. Catchy and loud. Fast and fun. Plus x-members of TV KILLERS. Fantastique.

BLACK TIME – "More Songs About Motorcycles and Death" LP (Wrench)
A great collection of catchy noisy garage songs, played fast and loud. Blown-out and distorted, messy and wild. Oh yeah.

SUPER WILD HORSES – "Fifteen" LP (Hozac)
Sometimes you don't need that much to create a lot. SUPER WILD HORSES are a minimal two-piece that create simple, yet cool songs. Pounding drums, jangley guitars and pretty, but forceful vocals.

THE PITY FUCKS – LP (Felony Fidelity)
Rough, mean primitive garage rock, but with peppy '60s style keyboards. You always need something to make your band stick out from the pack. The keyboards definitely make this a bit more dance-y than it would be otherwise. Catchy in a very sinister way.

EPs
THE LIMIÑANAS – "I'm Dead/ Migas 2000" (Hozac)
Side A of this is so damn catchy. I could listen it a hundred times per day. Boppy garage rock with a sultry French female singer. She sings this so sweet that you kind of forget she is saying that she is dead. Side B sounds a bit more psychedelic like a bar scene from a Godard film.

TIMMY'S ORGANISM – "I'm A Nice Guy Now/ Cold Pizza" (Cass)
Blown-out, distorted and angry even though he is desperately trying to convince us that he is indeed a nice guy now. When Timmy starts howling "Look at my face, smiling at the human race." You really want to believe he is making the effort. It also helps his case that the song is so damn catchy. Side 2 gets more droney and slows down, but still sounds brutal and wild. "You're like melted ice cream. You're like cold pizza." Not exactly a love song, or is it?

PERIPHERIQUE EST – "Le Rock D'ici" EP (Close Up)
Fast garage-y punk reminiscent of some of the great French bands of the '90s: TV KILLERS, NO TALENTS, SPLASH 4. But also reminds me of some of the first wave English bands particularly THE DAMNED. Lots of attitude and extremely catchy.

IDI AMIN AND THE AMPUTEES – "Disco Bitch/ Nasty Nazi" (Going Underground)
The sound on this 7" is amazing. It's so loud and abrasive. It sounds like some lost punk relic from the '70s. Plus the songs are so catchy, but pretty angry too. Just look at the titles.

TORTURED TONGUES – "Arizona Murder/ Extension Cord" (Lethal Triad)
From the liner notes: "Tortured Tongues is not pretty. Tortured Tongues. Angry Minds. Lives destroyed. Misery. Hate. Tortured Tongues is seeking revenge. On humanity. On themselves. On You." I don't think there's anything else I need to add.

TOTAL CONTROL – "Paranoid Video/ Real Estate" (Smartguy)
This sounds so '80s electronic. It is cold and monotonous, but with a compelling catchiness. Sounds like a more mellow METAL URBAIN with YOUNG MARBLE GIANTS' drum machine. Except that I've seen TOTAL CONTROL live so I know they don't use a drum machine.

MIDNITE SNAXXX – "Like Lightning/ Givin' Me The Business" (Raw Deluxe)
Really catchy power pop-ish garage rock with great females vocals. The PLEASURE SEEKERS sound and attitude is alive and well in 2010. That makes me very happy.

ROCKET FROM THE TOMBS – "I Sell Soul/ Romeo & Juliet" (Hearthan)
I am pretty enamored with anything David Thomas does. So I was very happy when he got back together with the most of the other guys from ROCKET FROM THE TOMBS (Cheetah Chrome and Craig Bell plus TELEVISION's Richard Lloyd and drummer Steve Mehlman). They have finally released two new songs. Side A is rockin'. Side B is a ballad. But both have an undeniable coolness.

THE CHICKENS – "Chicken Shit" EP (Siltbreeze)
I was once in a band that used a drum machine in a similar way to the CHICKENS. Guys would always tell us that we would be so much better of we got a "real" drummer. That has always made me love the drum machine more. Although the drum machine isn't the main focus of the CHICKENS' music it gives it a driving force. The guitars are fuzzy and garage-y. The vocals are laid-back and full of attitude. The whole thing together sounds great.

SLIPPERY SLOPES – "Sad Tugs" EP (Florida's Dying)
This might be easily classified as your average (read: boring) jangley garage rock if it was not for the messiness and the attitude. This singer is definitely not a wimp. "Pizza I'm Against It" is a classic tune for these days. Any song that requests tofu and hummus is OK with me.

REISSUES
STRAIGHTSHOOTER – "Straightshooter/ She's So Fine" (Sing Sing)
MIKE REP AND THE QUOTAS – "Stupor Hiatus" 2xLP (Siltbreeze)
HITLERSS – "Skate Like Elvis" CD (Hate)
THE WELDERS –"P-E-R-V-E-R-T" EP (BDR)
THE ENDTABLES – LP (Drag City)
EYES – "TAQN" 10" (Artifix)
CHIN CHIN – "We Don't Wanna Be Prisoners" EP (Mississippi)

LIVE SHOWS
Budget Rock 9 – one of the best yet. OBLIVIANS, ICKY BOYFRIENDS, JACK O & THE TEARJERKERS, REIGNING SOUND, THE SCRAMS, DADFAG, THE GET OFFS, TY SEGALL, WOUNDED LION, WILD THING, THE TEE'N'DEE EXPLOSION, MIDNITE SNAXXX, ANGORA DEBS, THE TOUCH-ME-NOTS…
Gonerfest 7 – my first time going. GUINEA WORMS, LOVE COLLECTOR, JOHN WESLEY COLEMAN, OBLIVIANS, MSR. JEFFREY EVANS, DAVE CLOUD, TY

SEGALL, TOTAL CONTROL, UV RACE, SUPER WILD HORSES, MENTHOLS, PARTING GIFTS, STRAPPING FIELD HANDS, ARMITAGE SHANKS... plus being in Memphis.
EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING – San Francisco, Oakland, Daly City
TOTAL CONTROL, UV RACE – San Francisco, Oakland
GORIES, NICE SMILE – San Francisco
THE CLEAN – San Francisco
HANK IV – record release San Francisco
X (Australia) – both San Francisco shows

GOLNAR NIKPOUR

Beyond a shadow of a doubt, 2010 was the worst year of my life. This gave me all the more reason to listen to the following noize and to say fuck all the rest. In no order except for the first two, here are my ten best punk records of 2010:

FIRMEZA 10 – "El Grito de la Tierra" 12" (self-released)
The overriding template for this Spanish raw punk band is DISCHARGE, but there is much more to FIRMEZA 10 than just following some well-trodden drumbeat. They drench their songs in feedback, their vocals—which sometimes reach Nick Blinko levels of intensity—are utterly vicious, and the presentation of their music is stripped of any excess or pretense. It is easy to imagine this record coming out in 1982 or 1989 or 2001 or 2010 or 2042 not because it is "retro," but because it doesn't appear to be aping any passing trends; FIRMEZA's music and aesthetic is simple, brutal, and from the crazy fucked up punk heart. To my mind, this is the best record of the year by far.

CRAZY SPIRIT – "Burning Churches" EP (Toxic State)
"Punk" means many things to many people. To me, in the year 2010, punk = CRAZY SPIRIT. Everything about this band excites me—their aesthetic, their psychotic vocals, their menacing, paranoid energy. If this band gets showered with a lot of the same ultimately meaningless adjectives that the increasingly dull mysterious guy HC trendoid bands get—dark, agitated, antisocial, crazed—that can only be our fault as reviewers, because CRAZY SPIRIT is not like those bands. CRAZY SPIRIT is different because there is also palpable joy in their music—not to mention actually catchy songs, riffs, and vocals! And when I say joy, I mean the kind of joy a deranged toddler would get at breaking a bunch of dishes on the kitchen floor or the FEEDERZ would get at putting a rock in a cop's face or Darby would get from combining Iggy, peanut butter, and a screeching microphone.

ILEGAL – "Error de Orden" EP (Lengua Armada)
Some years ago, Martin told me that when LOS CRUDOS began, they wanted to sound like classic Italian bands like IMPACT or DECLINO. I guess that means that ILEGAL is pushing the logic of CRUDOS to its obvious conclusion, sounding significantly more furiously Italian than their predecessor ever did while maintaining CRUDOS' political intensity. In the words of punks the world over: Ragin', dude.

CROW – "Vertigo / Occupied Japan" (Prank)
CROW has really been cranking out the 7"ers in recent years, and though none of these EPs have quite been able to measure up to the gargantuan impact of their last LP *Bloody Tear,* this two song EP (and particularly the A-side) packs enough low-end wallop to satisfy my yearly craving for rumbling, riff-fueled Japanese HC.

LAS SEÑORAS – "Digitacion" EP (Solo Para Punks)
Snotty, snarky, catchy, quirky, nearly perfect PFR from Madrid, Spain.

DAYLIGHT ROBBERY – "Through the Confusion" LP (Residue)
I don't know why this Chicago band doesn't get more respect. They write perfectly crafted, somber, and memorable punk songs that are at once catchy as they are melancholic. Regardless, they are one of the best straight up punk bands in the U.S. right now, and this long player one of the finest of the year.

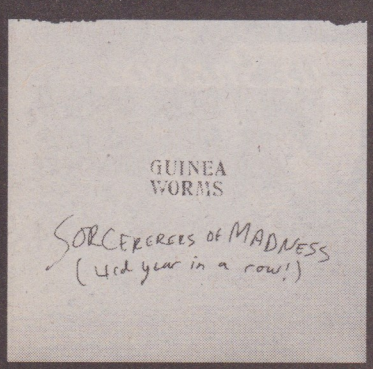
KRIEGSHÖG – LP (La Vida Es Un Mus/H:G Fact)
I think I have figured out "the thing" about this band. It took me a few listens, because at first I wasn't exactly sure what to make of this record. KRIEGSHÖG has the look of a Japanese crust band, and they reference the NWOBHM, but their manic, more-intense-than-the-sum-of-its-parts song structures and frenetic sound actually have quite a bit more in common with the most classic of Japanese HC bands like GAUZE or SYSTEMATIC DEATH. At first, when I heard this LP I wanted it to "rock" the way that FRAMTID does, but KRIEGSHÖG don't really go into "Life's Hard" headbanging territories. Instead, they graft the noize-not-music appeal of the GLOOM set over the furious repetition of classic Japanese HC. This LP is a masterpiece.

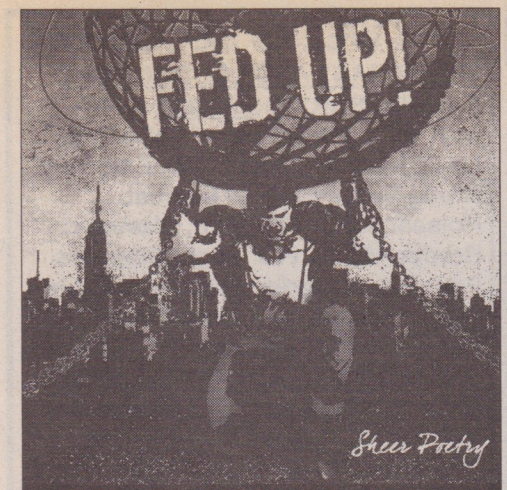
GLAM – "Duelo de Titanes" EP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
Remember when the DIY punk scene was all about the Copenhagen sound? And then the Osaka sound? The process that makes a country or city turn into a punk "it scene" has always been slightly mysterious, though it every few years that a particular scene seems to shine a little brighter than other locales. In recent years, "it scene" label has firmly attached itself to Barcelona (though is perhaps turning to Mexico City now?!)—one need go no further than this top ten to see that. Naturally, there is a law of diminishing returns when going to the same sound or scene over and over again. Just as no band on the post-FRAMTID Crust War roster ever really managed to capture the ferocity of that band and no ARRIGT ANTRAEK could never be as eye-popping as AMDI PETERSON'S ARME, one assumes that not every stripped down d-beat style HC record coming from Barcelona could really match the excitement generated by the explosion of first hearing INFIERNO DE COBARDES or INVASION. And yet...this GLAM record still succeeds. And I mean *really* succeeds. I find myself wanting to flip it back over to the A side when its done, which when you get right down to it is the highest compliment one could pay a hardcore record. GLAM is very much cut from the same cloth as INVASION / DESTINO FINAL, right down to the reverb soaked vocals (not to mention record label), and yet there are enough punchy, memorable hooks bathed in dark, anguished vocals to capture my continued attention.

RAYOS X – "Mi Desorden" EP (Lengua Armada)
"Melodic hardcore" can imply any number of things, many of them not so good things. But when done right—think URGENT FURY, ASTA KASK, early BAD RELIGION—it is basically the best thing. By now you've probably figured out that RAYOS X (from Los Angeles) plays the-good-kind-of-melodic-hardcore, though there is still quite a bit of pure hardcore in their sound. This fits in well with other known quantities from the classic and timeless L.A. punk sound.

KE SE MUERAN – "Histeria Katracha" EP (self-released)
One lucky day, I received this mysterious record in a package in the mail. It seems that a well-wishing friend thought that I would not be able to live without it, and they were right. KE SE MUERAN is a Honduran punk band that plays thrash so vicious with riffs so instantly memorable and vocals so harsh that this EP has hardly left my turntable in the intervening months. I thrash therefore I am.

Reissues of the year:
PROTEX – "Strange Obsessions" LP (Sing Sing)
VELVET UNDERGROUND – "Quine Tapes" 5xLP (Sundazed)





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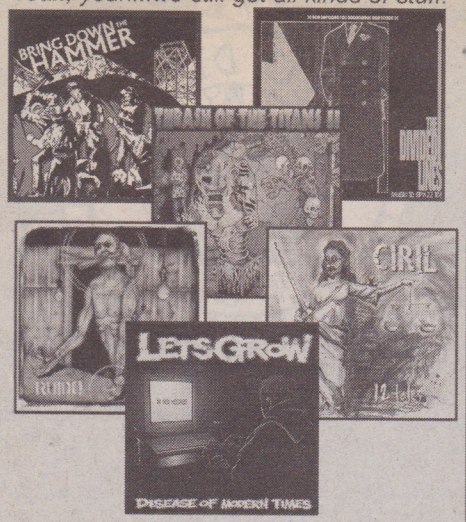

Lets Grow "Disease of Modern Times" LP
Ruido s/t LP
Ciril "12 Tales" LP
V/A "Thrash of the Titans 2" LP
Bring Down The Hammer s/t CD
The Divided Lines "Music To Spazz To" 7"
Larkin "Reckoning" CD
Ciril "Hysteria Driven" LP/CD
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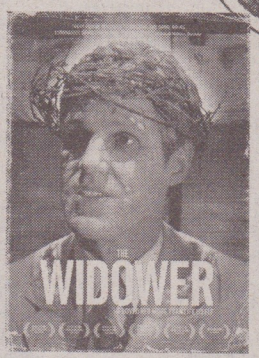

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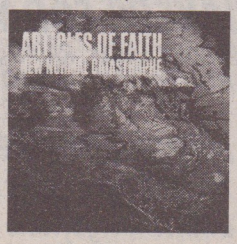
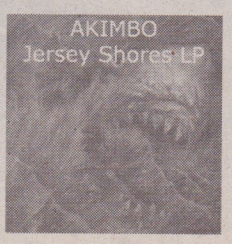
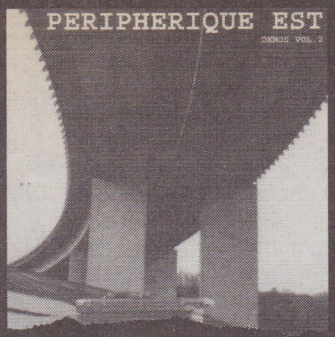






JUSTIN BRIGGS

Not much to say really… It was the year of "adults" in hardcore. Most of my favorite music was made by people in their thirties and up. Step it up next year kids!

Favorite music-related "___" of the year for me was:
SCAPEGOAT – live at Temple Sound and Stage in J.P., MA on Sept. 11th.
The line up for the gig was DROPDEAD, SCAPEGOAT, CONFINES, WASTE MANAGEMENT, and BRAIN KILLER, so there was no doubt I was at least in for a solid show. Every band was laying it down up to the point when SCAPEGOAT took the stage, and in turn I expected nothing less than a continuation of quality. If you've heard the records you know that they sound like an extension of CROSSED OUT; nothing fancy, and nothing new or groundbreaking, but an absolute solid listen of tried-and-true power violence HC. The instant their first note hit and the band and (sold-out-to-capacity) audience erupted like a car-bomb full of nails in a crowded city market, it was like a literal shockwave passed thru from the front of the room to the back, and out the door—totally surreal—and everyone maintained that power and energy for the rest of the twenty-ish minute set. It was impressive, to say the least, just how brutish, nasty, and loud it felt. I'm pretty sure I had a dorky smile on my face the whole set and looked really stupid grinning all huge while these dudes are bashing and scowling away on stage trying to look as angry as they sounded, but I couldn't help it. I was just way too shocked at how great it was. Like a moment of pure clarity as to why I was still into this shit 17 years after my first game. Keep your blinkers peeled for an LP coming soon on Painkiller.

SOCIETY NURSE – "Junk Existence" EP (Iron Lung)
In one word, I'd call this EP "adventurous." It's like the type of hardcore that adults play(?). People that have been around this music long enough to not be content with crafting some sort of static sound. This record really pushes the boundaries of hardcore and in that takes on many of the good elements that I like about '90s bands like HONEYWELL and updates it to a more "now" hardcore sound. The production and the way everything squeaks, squalls, and bleeds feedback definitely add to the appeal of this record for me. It's a messy and controlled, and lunging and nasty hardcore experience that is hidden behind the best looking packaging and artwork of the year.

VILE GASH – "Life-Rot" EP (Youth Attack)
This is the sound of a pure rage and frustration that is the resultant outcome of surviving amongst the wheat and rusting remains of America's past industrial victories, long forgotten and forgotten about, along with the hope and glory that went along with it. Nasty raw hardcore that reminds me more of the early Boston hardcore riffage than what one would normally think of following the phrase "raw hardcore"—maybe imagine a combination of the two. The minimal 'Discount production helps set the tone to this *ugly* record that I see as a pretty definitive one for HC2010 in sound and presentation, but VILE GASH rises above all others by the level of sheer disgust that seeps out of these grooves. Hope 2011 sees this band on some West Coast shows and more releases.

VACCINE – "Human Hatred" EP (Painkiller)
I *wish* I could put into words the disgust and hate that this record is just completely seething with. There's *nothing* posi about this straightedge platter whatsoever, and if music is meant to be an exercise in catharsis, I would wager that being in VACCINE is as cathartic as it gets. *Human Hatred* starts blasting from the first couple notes of "Your Life's a Joke," and rarely lets up, save a few stalking and stabbing parts on the B-side. The 5-song demo/demo 7" was a mere two minutes and six seconds, so I'm glad we didn't have to wait too long for more of this madness.

GLAM – "Duelo de Titanes" 7" (La Vida Es un Mus)
Like the crack of a whip this one starts, lets you know it happened and it's gone in an instant. I hate comparisons like this, but to me it sounds like KAAOS jamming out on '82-'85 Japanese (flexi)-punk, but faster and more "hard." What a rookie review, ouch. As I recall, this was the first release of the year that had me thinking "Top-Ten of 2010" material. Great fast'n'dark hardcore from these Spaniards who write quality tunes that don't actually try to ape a sound.

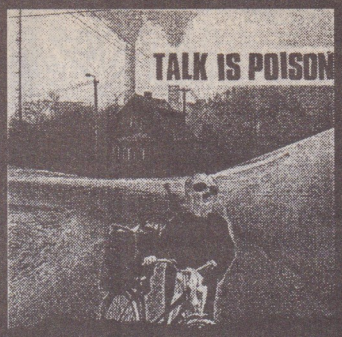
WHITE BOSS – LP (Perennial)
Quite an odd beast this LP is—it's a record that whatever I'm doing at the time I put it on must cease, as I find myself just staring at the ceiling and focusing on the building elements of these tracks climbing higher and higher. I'd say it's the only record that makes me excited to just stop. Relaxing but not mellow. Nor wild or riff-y either though. It's just really cool songwriting that uses tone and timing better than anything I can think of off hand. Much like a lot of what has gone on in Olympia these last handful of years, this band has a new and fresh sound and isn't gonna be for everybody, but I fucking love it. Droning tones meshed with punk riffs in a beautiful way.

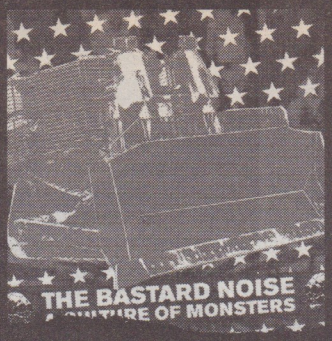
NO STATIK – "Clarified, Distilled.../ We All Die in the End (Edit)" (Iron Lung)
My favorite current local band. An ass-kicking rager of an A-side and a weird-as-fukk flip from this crew of hardcore veterans. NO STATIK is a great band where all of its members do their duty to take the basic riffs and make the songs better than the sum of their parts. The upcoming LP is a monster so you should grab that too when it drops.

MASSHYSTERI – LP (Feral Ward)
The first two tracks on this LP have redefined words such as, "hook" and, "melody," for this dawg. The history of punk has shown me just how many languages I wish I could speak if only for the sake of singing along to my record collection, but none more so than what these Swedes have produced this year with this punk'n'pop masterpiece…it's hauntingly infectious, to say the least. I sit here writing this and a quick look at my iPod will show this album in the top spot on my "Most Played" playlist (and who knows how many spins it got on my turntable), so it's pretty wild that on this listen I still get goosebumps from the chorus of "Dom Kan Inte Höra Musiken," which may I add, is the *only* song *ever* recorded that I will admit to benefiting from its use of saxophone. I fucking *hate* sax and generally render it the death knell of any song/band. This release is a shining example of quality craftsmanship, both in the tunes, and the wonderful and much appreciated job that Yannick does in putting together the records he releases on Feral Ward.

TALK IS POISON – "Rage to Infinity" EP (self-released)
This EP had the whiner's typing fingers all a-flutter immediately upon its release, cause it seemed like everyone had some sort of complaint, but I think with time the haters have warmed up to it. I mean, yeah, there are a few really subtle differences with this record from the older ones, like opening the record with leads and solos, but to me I always thought that "it's a TALK IS POISON record that sounds like a TALK IS POISON record," which is practically the best thing you could say about any piece of music. To me this EP shows just why these whip-smart gentlemen continue to be one of the angriest and most ferocious groups in hardcore well over a decade after they began.

NUKKEHAMMER – "Future of Siberia" cassette (Solar Funeral/Life Rot)
This is just ugly cold and rotten music. At times it reminds me of GAUZE jamming in a junkyard to a crowd of Swamp Thing clones and at others something more caveman-esque but at all times it's like a clash of animalistic behavior





in an urban and rusting theatre. Just awesome.

IN THE RUNNING:
KNIFE FIGHT – "Isolated" EP (Painkiller), ILEGAL 7", URBAN BLIGHT – "Total War" EP (Static Shock), CRIATURAS – demo tape, KRIEGSHÖG – LP (HG Fact/La Vida es un Mus), BASTARD NOISE – "A Culture of Monsters" LP and ENDLESS BLOCKADE split LP (Deep Six).

MARISSA MAGIC

RAPE REVENGE – "Car Ride with a Vivisection Intern" EP (True)
I reviewed this for *MRR* this month and I still have no words for it. Maybe just that I want a copy and please come to my town.

NU SENSAE – "TV, Death, and the Devil" LP (Nominal)
At some point this year I went on a West Coast tour and bummed out about the fact that I couldn't listen to this record in my room on repeat. These kids came into the running raging and continue to do so. With equal obsessions of the occult and BABES IN TOYLAND it's a dream come true for a lady screamer nerd like me. I fell in love with this band when they caused the end of a house party with their loud doom jams and this record only fuels the fire of my obsession.

BROKEN WATER – "Whet" LP (Night People)
I waited in anticipation for this album for so long and the second it landed on my turntable it didn't leave it for at least the next month. The easy reference is SONIC YOUTH but to me it just sounds like an aural manifestation of the emotions and landscapes of the northwest; dismal rain, wet forests, gray skies, screamingly good times, crowded house parties, raging depression and never ending creative catharsis.

MILK MUSIC – demo tape
After reading the *Nuts* interview with MILK MUSIC I somehow convinced myself they were weirdo surf music. I went to see them with WHITE BOSS and they had me drooling at first note. It kind of reeks of DINOSAUR JR. and MEAT PUPPETS and is soooo perfect. It's like sad bedroom jams being played by a punk band. I ended up with a copy of the *Beyond Living* LP, which is also really killer and shares a lot of songs with this. But somehow this demo just continues to steal my heart.

SON SKULL – 'Birth Scene/Rewind" 12" EP (Perennial)
At first listen I really didn't like this record. I kind of forgot about it, whatever. Then when MILK MUSIC and WHITE BOSS came through town I gave it another listen and did a total 180. This record is amazing. Raging, emotional. The guitar playing is chaotic and crazed but fits perfectly, the singing is angry on the edge of losing shit but not. My favorite track by far is "Housing", but really, it's a platter full of hits.

THE WHINES – "Hell to Play" LP (Meds)
I got a 7 inch of theirs a long time ago and fell in love with what can be described as a girl singing bummed out electrified Neil Young songs. When they blasted through town I found myself moshing along to them in an unfinished basement where everyone kept slipping in piles of red dirt. It was a magical moment and everytime I listen to this it brings it all back perfectly.

WHITE LUNG – "Atlanta" EP (Deranged)
A really long time ago I read an interview with this band where they discussed the fact that they get compared to BIKINI KILL all the time (which is utter bullshit). I mail ordered their first seven inch and listened to it obsessively for two weeks. I never really got a chance to listen to the full length that came out this year due to the fact that I got a copy from them and then let it bake in the car under the LA sun, but this seven inch has joined the group of records that never really get put away because they are part of the heavy rotation.

WEIRD TV – demo tape
There were rumblings for months that this was something to look forward to. I went to their Oakland show and haven't flipped out that hard for a while. It's pretty straight forward but somehow so transcendent. At the show the singer grabbed me by the neck and shoved the mic into my face and I screamed as hard as I could. This tape quickly got into the tape deck at my house and wowed house guest after house guest for months on end.

KITCHENS FLOOR – "Loneliness is a Dirty Mattress" LP (RIP Society/Bedroom Suck)
This is one of my favorite things because it sounds like bleakness cobbled together. All the instruments seem out of tune or broken, the vocals exhausted and bored. *Confusion is Sex* if it sounded super disaffected. Another thing that rarely leaves the turntable.

AMERICAN SPLITS – demo tape
This demo freaks me out because it comes off as more of a sound collage than a straight forward demo. Radio clips, practice tapes, jam sessions, live shows and just a couple actual studio recordings. Songs jerk to a start and jarringly cut-off without warning. My friend once described them as drugs at the disco which is really the best way to explain it.

BOB GOLDIE

NOWHERE FAST – "No Escape" EP (Mind Rot)
These dudes might be current and from Liverpool but they embody the Boston hardcore sound like it was 1981 so good that you'd swear this was some sort of long lost and recently unearthed classic that slipped through the cracks. I'm talking about the angrier Boston bands like IMPACT UNIT and DYS. The fairly crappy sound quality on this gives almost a bootleg feeling to it, but it's not unlistenable by any means. You just gotta turn it up louder. Hardcore.

COLA FREAKS – CD (Hjernespind)
There are quite a few amazing bands from Denmark and COLA FREAKS are quickly establishing themselves as one of the most interesting. Like some of their contemporaries, they flawlessly combine all the elements of really good punk and classic rock and roll, and add a bit of surf and new wave just to make it better. All of this produces an album that is interesting and exciting and listenable throughout while never losing its punk edge even for a moment. So good!

C.I.A. – "God, Guts, Guns...and More" LP (More Than A Witness)
With all the unearthed tracks, this is more than simply a reissue, so I think it's pretty valid for the 2010 list though it's been almost 30 years since the songs were recorded. Aside from the classic songs that appeared on the *God, Guts, Guns* EP, there are a bunch of killer unreleased tunes that together are truly a lost treasure for fans of early '80s hardcore (of which the C.I.A. EP was arguably one of the best of that era). The sound quality is excellent as well, as most of the tracks are pulled from studio session and demo tapes. Totally worth getting!

SLOBAX – "Samhället Har Rasat Sönder" – EP (Promenade)
What I first expected to be just a random pop-punk EP, judging by the humdrum cover and the fact that this band appeared on some comp a few years back that featured many marginally acceptable acts like Lagwagon and Home Grown, turned out to be one of my most listened to records of the year. These Swedes should not be lumped anywhere freakin' close to the shitty bands that might come to mind when thinking of the dreaded pop punk invasion of the '90s. SLOBAX conjured up the spirit of KBD punk styling before it was the thing to do. They probably didn't even know they were doing it! Throw in the melody of early BAD RELIGION and you've got a fine punk record in

your hands. Recorded back in '94, this EP has been unjustly withheld from us until just this year. Too bad, these guys should've been bigger.

CÜLO – "Military Trend" EP (Deranged)
Just as the early '80s hardcore revival wave had begun to subside (a good thing considering all the boring third rate clone bands that were wasting wax these last few years), along came this EP to serve as a reminder that there will always be amazing bands that do it just right, with sincerity and a touch of originality, keeping true hardcore alive and relevant. Super fast and furious and perfectly done jams, and much better than the fantastic first EP, you've gotta check this out if you respect yourself at all.

SICK MORMONS – "Why Does Shit Keep Falling From the Sky?" EP (Gummopunx)
Listening to this Dutch band keeps me hopeful for the future of punk music. Haunting, moody and snotty, this EP immediately falls into the "keeper" category of your collection, never to be desperately purged. This is right up there will those other great bands like NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS and the MASSHYSTERI, who blend melodic, early '80s California punk with their own approach to create music that is fresh and authentic while simultaneously recapturing the mood and sound from a golden era. I'm really looking forward to an LP!

YOUNG OFFENDERS – "Leader of the Followers" 12" (Deranged)
"Hot Sun" just might be the single greatest punk song of the year. Like the rest of the tunes found on this mandatory 12" (it's comprised of eight tracks, falling somewhere between an EP or LP), the track is melodic, driving, heartfelt, and capable of lodging deep into your head. The lyrics are real and the musicianship outstanding. You'll flip this record over a few times before you dare take it off the turntable. Guaranteed.

RED DONS – "Fake Meets Failure" LP (Deranged)
The fanaticism seen in the screaming teenage girls at BEATLES concerts overcomes me whenever I listen to something involving Doug Burns (OBSERVERS and SPEDS). This album just might have been my most anticipated release of the year and I definitely was not let down (a fear that always goes through me every time I hear a new record). Resurrecting the sound of canonical melodic punk bands from over the years, from 999 to Posh Boy classics to early AFI (gulp!), the RED DONS have earned their own place in the mix.

ARSENE OBSCENE – "Zone Industrielle" LP (P.Trash)
Sometimes it's hard to distinguish the Slovenly EPs and 45s because of the same cover design, so I almost let the *Partir a la Guerre* EP slip past me! A friend of mine threw it on while spinning records and drinking whiskey one night at his house and I was totally blown away. I stood up drunkenly and mumbled with a slur, "this ish the perfect punk shound! Thish fuggin' rules!" I had no idea who this French punker was (is this really a one-man act? *Incroyable!)*, and still don't, really, but I made up my mind right there and then that I must own it; my life and record collection would be incomplete without it. I think I made such a spectacle (ass) out of myself that he gave it to me and sent me packing. Now the full length is out just in time for the top of the year list. Don't miss out on this one! Low fi distortion punk at its finest.

LOW THREAT PROFILE – "Kick My Heart" – EP (Deep Six/Draw Blank)
I seriously almost came when I heard this! LOW THREAT PROFILE play unbelievably and undeniably perfect powerviolence hardcore the way it's meant to be done—fast and brutal with no friggin' metal and goat vocal bullshit. Having intensely worshipped NO COMMENT and INFEST back in their heyday of the early '90s, and when those groups broke up and I thought all was lost, getting satisfaction through LACK OF INTEREST, I couldn't believe it when I heard this EP is the result of members from all three of those bands. And it sounds exactly what you would hope for with that description! Technically this came out in December of 2009, but didn't make our reviews until 2010, so fuck off 'cause this rules and deserves to be listed again. Full LP on the way with Chris Dodge on bass? That's the rumor. 2011 is gonna be a good one!

AL QUINT

Putting these in order is a tough task so consider this rough order but my favorite two albums of the year are VAASKA and DOUBLE NEGATIVE. I doubt any of these records will dent my all-time favorites list but these are all worth your time. Overall, I think this year's crop was better than last year's. I guess I'm not as jaded as I thought I was.

LPs and 12"s
DOUBLE NEGATIVE – "Daydreamnation" LP (Sorry State)
A thorny rager from these old-timers from Raleigh, NC. They had my "album of the year" in '07 and, three years later, they repeat. You can still hear the COC-isms but it's hazier and denser-sounding and Kevin's vocals buried deeper in the mix. Add some DIE KREUZEN-ish touches and also a dollop of '90s era Amphetamine Reptile sonic wreckery and it adds up to a mind-melting experience.

VAASKA – "Ruido Hasta La Muerte" LP (540)
For VAASKA's second album, they continue to follow a d-beat blueprint but the difference for this band is the warm, subtly melodic quality to the guitar tone and that's fused to the band's straight-on-wallop. Piercing leads are added to the charging fray. My copy is actually on Hardware Records out of Germany and included their first 12" on the other side. Not all Dis-inspired music sounds the same and VAASKA continue to prove that.

YOUNG OFFENDERS – "Leader Of The Followers" 12" (Deranged)
For YOUNG OFFENDERS' first solo 12" (they previously had a split with GIANT HAYSTACKS), there's an abundance of jittery energy and big hooks, underpinned by incredibly adept playing and strong harmonies. Not pop music but super-catchy.

GENBAKU ONANIES – "Solid" CD (Trippin' Elephant)
I'm ashamed to admit I hadn't heard of this long-time Japanese band before being tipped off about how SOLID this album was (sorry—I'm tired). A rockin' and rollin' treat that embraces heavier rock as much as punk. Even a MINUTEMEN/NOMEANSNO bass pummel on one song and a cover of the YARDBIRDS' "Shapes of Things." Nothing typical here, going through various chord-driven permutations. Unfortunately, only available on CD from Japan and quite expensive. This should be more widely available.

THE ENERGY – "The Energy's First Album" LP (Team Science)
Someone placed this record in my hands at the Chaos in Tejas fest and I can't thank him enough. Some of the nastier lyrics you're going to hear all year, delivered in a deadpan cadence. Suicide, murder, mayhem and the matter-of-fact delivery makes it all that much more chilling. This is accompanied by a jabbing, chaotic punk sound that works itself into fits of delirium at times, especially the stop 'n' start opening track "Destroy Imagination."

EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING – "Rush To Relax" LP (Goner)
ECSR's third album doesn't approach the level of brilliance of the first two but, even with its flaws, still has plenty to offer. "Anxiety," with its scintillating guitar climax that damn near brings tears of joy, is one of my favorite songs of the year. Continuing to assimilate the best of X, THE FALL and WIRE into their own unique sound and Mikey (aka Eddy) is one of the more creative guitarists I've heard in recent years.

CATBURGLARS – LP (Criminal IQ)
Garagey punk rock that's full of vim, vigor and fun times. Buzz and bash in the vein of some of the Rip Off Records bands i.e. the sound is rough and the songs snotty as hell. The tongue is planted so far into the cheek that it's in danger of poking through. A winning tandem of wise-assed attitude and the burn to back it up. I love their cover of the RUNAWAYS' "Cherry Bomb," too.

HERÄTYS – LP (Not Enough)
Swedish hardcore with a traditional basis and appropriately harsh vocals but the wall of sound is traded in for more of a stripped down approach. Relentless songs to pump your fist until you feel as though your arm will fall off. I'll cut 'em slack for the *shameless* plunder of "Ace Of Spades" on one song because this is a riveting album.

SECRET PROSTITUTES – "Never Mind the KBD, This is ADD" LP (Bad Hair Life)
I just got this around the end of the year—and I'm glad I did 'cause there are only 400--but it's been a constant on my turntable and iPod ever since. 23 tracks that definitely sound as though it's made for people with ADD and the hyperkinetic energy of these songs won't alleviate it. A Houston band but drummer/vocalist Amit sings in Indonesian (!) and in high, nasally cadence. A '77 spirit but not easily nailed down. The songs also have a garagier jitteriness at times.

FLAG OF DEMOCRACY – "Home Lobotomy Kit" LP (Motherbox)
Yes, Philly's legendary FOD are still a going concern, coming up on three decades. This album

was actually recorded in 2005 but released this past year and it's a scorcher. They've always found a way to mix up speedy, crazed, tumultuous hardcore with incredibly stinging melody lines that fight their way through the fray. The vocals take the primal scream route but it's a damned harmonious one, particularly when Jim and Dave's emanations end up tangled together. They haven't lost a step.

... and the rest...
7"s:
MANIPULATION – "Violence" (Fashionable Idiots)
CONFINES –"Withdrawn" (Labor Of Love/Side Two)
ARCTIC FLOWERS – "Slouching Towards Bethlehem" (self-released)
SCEPTRES – "Flatline Generation" (Dire)
DRY HUMP – "Culture Fuck Experience" (Shogun)
Demos:
MURDER-SUICIDE PACT
ZERO ZERO
NINPULATORS
BOSTON STRANGLER
VILE BODIES
Live:
SYSTEMATIC DEATH, TALK IS POISON, YOUNG OFFENDERS, SLANG, BASTARD, JERRY'S KIDS, NOMOS, THE TROUBLE, EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING, MALE NURSES, CONFINES, BLOODKROW BUTCHER, BRAIN KILLER, BUZZCOCKS

CHUCK BARRELS

Another year in the can, packed with plenty of musical adventure and hijinks. A wild ride. Assembling these lists are usually a real chore. Tough decisions to be made and such. But I think 2010 was one of the easiest years to round up in quite some time. I've done this exercise for at least the past ten years for various dubious publications, along with and alongside MRR *these past couple years, and figuring out my faves this time was actually quite simple. Not that I think it was a year that didn't have a lot of great records, I just think the cream rose to the top of the crop very nicely in this instance, with only a couple tough calls in the EP category. Please remember I'm a "garage guy" when reflecting on these selections. I loved the LOW THREAT PROFILE 7" and such, but I'll stay in my own league for this list. Here we go…*

TOP TEN SINGLES/EPS

UV RACE – "Knife Fight" EP (Fashionable Idiots)
Australia's most charming band of ruffians wins our hearts all over again. Splendid stuff.

BITS OF SHIT – "Dirty Bomb" EP (Lexicon Devil)
My favorite Aussie 7" of the year, aggro and cretinous punk thunder from Down Under with members of OOGA BOOGAS, SAILORS, ONYAS and more.

PUERTO RICO FLOWERS – "4" 12" EP (Fan Death)
An early 2010 favorite. John Sharkey out-maneuvers COLD CAVE with a stunning display of emotional grit that should have Goth girls worldwide biting their pillows.

HIS ELECTRO BLUE VOICE – "Wolf" 12" EP (Holidays Records)
A fantastic voyage of sci-fi space rock from a mysterious Italian outfit. Aggressive, driving and stunningly creative future rock.

WICCANS – "Teenage Cults" EP (Pass Judgement)
Burly hardcore punk taking cues from Midwest classics, but ending up sounding more like YDI. Best vocal performance of the year.

PUFFY AREOLAS – "Rock'n'Roll Express" EP (Die Stasi)
Prescription medication psych-rock tripping on two sides. MONOSHOCK for the new decade.

FOLDED SHIRT – "F/S" EP (Fashionable Idiots)
MR. CALIFORNIA + Lean Steve + Dr. Larry Darvocet + Anus = how the hell can you not like this? The TRAVELING WILBURYS of mongo-punk.

CLOCKCLEANER – "Auf Wiedersehen" 12" EP (Load)
Swan song from these Skull Music innovators. Beautiful stuff. I'm just sad I'll never get to see them play these songs live with a really slow strobe light behind them blinking like a homing beacon.

HOME BLITZ – "Perpetual Night/Murder in My Heart" (Almost Ready)
Pop record of the year from New Jersey's brightest young talent. All that and more.

HOMOSTUPIDS "Night Deacon" EP (Fashionable Idiots)
America's Greatest Rock'n'Roll Band deliver in spades. Again. It doesn't get any better than this folks.

TOP TEN FULL LENGTHS

INSUBORDINATES – LP (Cowabunga Records)
My "homer" pick of the year from Western New York's finest and snottiest surf-punks. Rotcore is go!

DRUID PERFUME – "Tin Boat to Tuna Town" LP (Bumbo)
BEEFHEART-ian weird-punk-jazz skronk from the ashes of PIRANHAS and other Detroit kooks. Unique and demented.

THE INTELLIGENCE – "Males" LP (In the Red)
Final record (supposedly) from a beloved band who went out on top. Weird garage pop with an unmistakable voice honed over many years of hits.

MOONHEARTS – LP (Tic Tac Totally)
Resuscitating the drowned body of surf rock and adding a healthy dose of moody garage rock'n'roll. My favorite "West Coast" record of the year.

BIRDS OF MAYA – "Ready to Howl" 2XLP (Richie)
Trippin' balls bluesrock epic from these Philly mechanics. If you like guitars and drugs…

SEX CHURCH – "Six Songs By…" LP (Convulsive)
People are saying GUN CLUB Goth-rock vibes, but I say Krautrock drone via SPACEMEN 3 with some VELVET UNDERGROUND.

STRAIGHT ARROWS – "It's Happening" LP (Juvenile)
A late entry that is good enough to shoot right up the list. Psychedelic garage-pop reverberation with great "production" and even greater hooks. Reminds me of when the BLACK LIPS were still making great records. Australian rules.

DEAD FARMERS – "Go Home" LP
From Australia, again. No nonsense rock jamming that takes me back to the days of COSMIC PSYCHOS and other classic Antipodean brawlers. (RIP Society)

PUFFY AREOLAS – "In The Army 1981" LP (Siltbreeze)
Trip at the brain feel-bad psychedelic garage. HAWKWIND getting flushed down the toilet with your stash.

TYVEK "Nothing Fits" LP (In the Red)
Absolutely riveting from start to finish. TYVEK stop fucking around and go full-on punk while retaining the DIY charm. Undisputed champ.

OTHER NOTABLES: various 7"s by The OUTDOORSMEN, CHINESE RESTAURANTS "Summer Romance," EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING and UV RACE live and on record, HPP and MILK MUSIC, PURLING HISS "Hissteria" LP, everything by INSERVIBLES, BRAIN CAR "Rock'n'Roll Bologna" EP, JAMES ARTHUR LP and 7", every record CONDOMINIUM released, some PEOPLE'S TEMPLE cuts and more….

TOP REISSUES

There were just so many amazing reissues this year it's impossible to make a complete list. Here are 10 things you need and I could easily come up with a dozen more, in particular stuff on "major labels" we shant be discussing in these hallowed pages….

BRAINBOMBS – "Singles Comp" and "Urge to Kill" on wax via Load Records, plus some Euro-editions of their other LPs. You either like riffs or…

A-FRAMES – "333" 3XLP on S-S Records, lovely packaging and an outstanding collection of demos, singles and various other unreleased nugs from everyone's favorite monotone punks.

ENDTABLES – "s/t" LP on Drag City, giving one of the KBD-eras finest their due.

Everything on SING SING RECORDS, reissuing only the finest in power pop gems/obscurities with impeccable packaging. TUNNELRUNNERS, JEFF HILL, TINOPENERS and other winners…

BOOTLEGS: THE PACK, IVY GREEN, that BRIAN ENO "BBC Sessions" LP, that BOYS NEXT DOOR "punk record," THE DICKS "Kill From the Heart" and more….thank you whoever you people are.

H-100s live LP. A necessary piece of the Cleveland hardcore catalog.

DOLLY MIXTURE – "Demonstration Tapes" 2XLP – painfully limited but painstakingly authentic right down to the rubber stamps and signatures. (Germs of Youth)

CLYDE & THE NIGHT SWINGERS – "Enormous Midnight" 7" – amazing lost recordings from an unrealized Sixties exploitation film. Two surprisingly killer cuts of vintage psych madness. (Arcania International)

V/A "The New Hope" 2XLP – seminal Eighties Clevo hardcore comp gets expanded to a double LP with heaps of quality bonus cuts. THE GUNS, THE DARK, SPIKE IN VAIN, ZERO DEFEX and more from one of my all-time favorite cities/scenes. (Smog Veil)

LAST LAUGH RECORDS – doing the Lord's work by legitimately reissuing the finest in Killed by Death singles in lavishly authentic packaging and directly from master sources. They sound as great as they look. THE NORMALS, FREESTONE, THE EAT, ZEROS and more All American Punk, no foreign junk! Collect them all! Unless you have originals, and I know you don't!

DAN GOETZ

I spent a third of 2010 traveling, and another third of 2010 suffering from some sort of bizarre cognitive bedroom allergies that left me unable to really kick back and listen to records, so I ended up hearing a lot fewer records than usual this year. Out of those I did hear and that had their chance to make an impact on me, here are my picks:

NUCLEAR FAMILY – LP (Loud Punk)
Melodic, existential punk that's done amazingly well, to say the least. I've already said a bunch about this record, but if you've heard it, or caught them on any of their tours last year, you know what I'm talking about.

WHITE LUNG – "It's the Evil" LP (Deranged)
I liked the other records they did, but was completely taken aback by this LP. This band might be considered too "hipster" for some, but the energy and attitude here can't be touched by most of the hardcore I heard this year.

INSURGENTS – "Fad Cash" EP (Distort/Pederast Prophet)
Proud To Be Idiot goes to art school and rooms with Raw Punk kid instead of Hair Dye and Thrift Store Vomit kid. I wouldn't expect anything less from the Distort camp.

XTRA VOMIT – side of split EP with TROPIEZO (IFB)
This came in for review just this month, and it blew me away enough to warrant a last minute addition to this list. This Is Western Michigan, Not Portland/NYC/Austin/your overhyped city.

LA VOZ – "Deprimido" EP (Lengua Armada)
The LA Raw Ponx scene has been insanely productive over at least the last couple of years, but this band is my favorite of its exports. I cut my teeth on bands like LIFE'S HALT, and comparisons between them and LA VOZ go beyond the superficial.

SCEPTRES – "Flatline Generation / The Tow" (Dire)
Pop that's both catchy and cynical is my favorite kind, and the SCEPTRES are to thank/blame for "head head, I'm head over heels" being stuck in my head for the entire year.

MAYDAY! – "Illegal Alien vs. Child Predator" EP (Feral Kid)
Buffalo may be more known for ice than waves, but MAYDAY can bring the doomed beach party like no other.

NO STATIK – "Clarified, Distilled, Recomposed/We All Die in the End" 7" (Iron Lung)
Probably my favorite local band other than LIVID. I can't count the number of times I saw them in 2010, and they were nothing short of annihilating every time. This record is amazing, but only hints at the greatness of their live show, and the LP that is imminent.

ZOMBIE DOGS – LP (Strength in Numbers)
All-female nerdy, primitive hardcore that strips down the early Dischord sound to its essentials, not unlike the first AMDI PETERSENS ARME 7". Part of what makes this record so memorable are also the lyrics, which are some of the most direct, honest, and original I've heard from a punk record in years.

BAYONETTES – "Guilty Pleasures / Outta My Mind" 7" (Deranged)
The A-side is one of my favorite BAYONETTES songs from their demo (along with "Dead End Kids," and it's a crime that that single is limited to 250), which didn't get put to vinyl while they were still a band, but thankfully is seeing release now.

Top eleven live sets:
SICK FIX at the Electrik Maid, DC
NOMOS at Sterling Lofts, Toronto
NOMAD at the Swamp, Oakland
NUCLEAR FAMILY at the Shirley Temple of Doom, Oakland
URBAN BLIGHT at Sterling Lofts, Toronto
DEATHRATS at the 3rd St. Co-op, DC
THE RIVAL MOB (and stage banter) at the Electrik Maid, DC
Every NO STATIK show
AGATHA at 16th St. BART, SF
BODYCOP at the Junkyard, Gainesville
OUTLOOK at the Five Points Art House, SF

GREG HARVESTER

The overall tone of 2010 sucked. We rang in the beginning of the year with a fucking gigantic earthquake in Haiti, which killed friends of my friends. Later, a good friend of mine tried to kill himself and spent the bulk of the year in surgery and therapy. All the while, I was helping to support my partner, who was going through treatment for cancer. At least some good music came out of last year and every record on this list was responsible for helping me to make it through.

Top Eleven LP's
THE BODY – "All The Waters Of The Earth Turn to Blood" 2xLP (Aum War)
The BODY consists of two affable men named Lee and Chip who love dogs and playing pinball. They are also responsible for writing an amazing double LP that sounds like the aural equivalent of piles of dead bodies, subway tunnels full of sarin and the end of the world. There is no sunshine on this record; not one upbeat note or good vibe. Everything is slow, dark, and heavy as fuck with shouted/strained vocals. This is easily my favorite record of 2010.

MUTOID MEN – "Mutoid World" LP (Rumbletowne)
This band does a lot of things that usually don't work for me with most bands, such as incorporate hard-rock guitar riffs and a Moog. When it is teamed up with ridiculous (and smart) lyrics about science, math and (possibly) how the construct of gender would be useless if we just lived on the bottom of the sea, this shit comes across as 100% golden. I think this band is completely underrated and amazing. The cover is a gatefold mind-fuck of science and space that is completely hand drawn by the artist formerly known as Monkey Bubbles. You can still order this and I highly recommend it.

RANGE RATS – LP (Mississippi)
Technically, this is a new release and not a reissue since it wasn't released until 2010, even though it was recorded in 1985. This LP is the missing link between the RATS and DEAD MOON, and finds Fred and Toody Cole just as essential, inspired and heartfelt as ever. The first time I put this record on, I felt like I was hearing something that I had been missing for my whole life; like hearing BLACK FLAG's "Nervous Breakdown" for the first time when you're thirteen years old. This isn't raging punk though. It sounds like

DEAD MOON posing as a tight country band and sometimes incorporating an off-time analog drum machine named Rollie. So great!

HOT NEW MEXICANS – LP (Houseplant/ Recess)
HOT NEW MEXICANS have been putting out nothing but pure gold since day one (which was about seven years ago, I think). This new LP is no exception. They always get compared to famous indie-rock bands that I have never heard before, which is fine. I think they're better than those bands though because they really keep it real by keeping it DIY, rough and recording everything themselves in their bedroom. Plus, they write amazingly catchy, jangly, direct songs that will make you jump around your room all night. See them on tour on the U.S. west coast in February!

SOPORS – "Golden Era #267" LP (Mongo Bongo)
I got this record for review at *MRR* without knowing much about SOPORS, besides that they were a punk band from San Francisco. It fucking blew me away with its sloppy, raw, insane pop songs. As I said in my review before, they follow in the long tradition of fucked up, blown out bay area punk like HICKEY, TOMMY LASORDA, TULSA, BANANAS, and 50 MILLION. Some of the songs devolve into so much chaos that you can't tell if they even figured out how to fully play the song before they recorded it. Don't get me wrong here; there's some serious pop hooks buried in the confusion and noise that makes for some memorable listening. It's fucking beautiful, really.

MASSHYSTERI – LP (Feral Ward)
I've heard my more hardcore friends complain that this record is a lot poppier than their last LP and I'll have to agree with them. Whereas, they see it as a detriment, I see it as an improvement. This record finds MASSHYSTERI more focused, tight and exuding a sort-of Stiff Records feel without floundering around in goofy nostalgia. Just get it. It's fucking great! It might be their last album since I just read that they might have broken up. They also manage to use a goddamn *saxophone* without making me want to throw the record out the goddamn window.

RVIVR – LP (Rumbletowne)
I heard this once before the record came out while hanging out with my friend, Alex, in Olympia. I thought it was kinda boring. After the record was released, something changed. This album is put together perfectly so that each song flows well into the next one and the songwriting is excellent. The record has a gloomy feel that sounds like winter in the Pacific Northwest to me. A lot of these songs are anthemic and political without being overbearing. One of the songs rips off RANCID, whether the band wants to admit it or not. Also, I appreciate a band with good politics; i.e: calling people on their shit, keeping things DIY, using your talents to benefit the community, selling things at low/no cost and just being honest.

ADD/C – "Busy Days" LP (Mauled By Tigers / Plan-it-X South)
This record squeaked in at the end of the year, but I had already been listening to a tape of it for months. I already gushed about this LP in the reviews section of this issue, so you can read about it there.

RED DONS – "Fake Meets Failure" LP (Deranged / Taken By Surprise)
I didn't know that this band existed until this year, which is a shame, because I loved the singer's former band, the OBSERVERS. I found this album to be more solid and less grandiose than their first LP. They successfully mix gloomy Pacific Northwest feelings, old southern California punk and punctuate it with smart, informed lyrics about the state of this shitty world.

DEFECT DEFECT – LP (Residue)
I used to like DEFECT DEFECT because they were my friends and I thought their band was okay. Then, they got really fuckin' good and this LP proves it. Totally tight, righteous punk that has a brought a room full of people to insane levels of wild abandon.

SHELLSHAG – "Rumors In Disguise" LP (Don Giovanni)
Shell and Jen are total freaks and I love them. They write fucking love songs for one another and set up facing each other so that they are singing to the other person's face. This LP has the undeniable hit "Resilient Bastard" as well as many other instant classics. I spent my summer traveling with these two and watched them alternate between playing these songs to empty bars and packed rooms. Either way, they sang them with heart and conviction every time, as if they were selling out Madison Square Garden every night. Sigh.

Top Ten EPs
MARKED MEN – "On / The Other Side" (540)
I love THE MARKED MEN so much. It's sad that this is probably my least favorite record that they have ever released (but their best cover art to date) and it's still a million times better than most of the other shit that came out this year. Hopefully, this won't be their last record.

ARCTIC FLOWERS – "Slouching Towards Bethlehem" EP (self-released)
I only listened to this band in the first place because my friend, Mike plays drums for them. Then, I fell for their anarcho peace-punk shit. I'm sure someone else in this mag is writing about them as well, Go read that.

MORALEN VÄKTARE – "Raka Rör" EP (Ken Rock)
This is exactly what I picture when I want to hear garage rock: snotty, fast, sloppy and low-budget. This EP is perfect.

THE POTENTIAL JOHNS – "Can I Really Not Go With You / Past Due" (Dirtnap)
I've been completely obsessed with this band since I heard them by chance on a mixtape in 1997. Obsessed. To date, they (actually just songwriter Jeff Burke) have not written one bad song. When I put on "Past Due" for the first time in my room, it literally stopped me in my tracks. I had to sit down and listen to it five times in a row. This is what I wish AM radio actually sounded like. Eerie and distant, but beautifully engaging. The other song is great too, but there's only a certain amount of space in this magazine.

CHIN CHIN – "We Don't Want To Be Prisoners" EP (Mississippi)
Yet another forgotten classic unearthed by Mississippi Records. Swiss all female punk from 1984. All three songs are choppy, urgent and amazing. I think this EP is ten times better than the LP that Mississippi released later in the year.

DARK RIDES – "Opponent" EP (Do Ya Hear We)
This is another record that slipped in right at the tail end of December. This is the shit that makes me lose my fucking mind. Tuneful, fast, sincere punk that has a pop hook with female / male vocals sharing the mic. It sounds easy enough, but there aren't a lot of bands that do this shit right. Brought to you by former and current members of HIDDEN SPOTS, FUTURE VIRGINS, TULSA and FORCED VENGEANCE.

SPECTRES / ARCTIC FLOWERS – split EP (Charged // Distorted)
SPECTRES is synthy, anarcho-goth, which usually isn't my thing, but their song on here is really great. ARCTIC FLOWERS delivers a mid-tempo, totally solid jammer about bombs falling and our current culture of war. This is a great split where I enjoy both bands equally, even though they are delivering different styles of punk. I wish more bands tried this hard.

NO STATIK – "Cultivated, Distilled, Recomposed / We All Die In the End" (Iron Lung)
This wasn't what I expected from this band at all.

It's some "next level" hardcore shit that includes dance beats! Dance beats! It didn't deter me at all, but pulled me into the swirling madness that is NO STATICK. When is the last time you heard female fronted, fucked hardcore that incorporates German techno and did not come across as pretentious, poser, mysterious-guy shit? This fucking rules!

THE EAT – "Communist Radio / Catholic Love" (Last Laugh)
Yeah, yeah, I know it's another reissue, but these are two of the best songs I've ever heard in my life. Period.

FORGETTERS – "Vampire Lessons" 2x7" (Too Small To Fail)
I can't help it. Every time I've heard Blake Schwarzenbach's voice on record in the past twenty years, I can't help but hang on every word. It's timeless and classic. FORGETTERS almost manage to erase those years between the demise of JAWBREAKER and the present. Almost. All four songs on these two records are instant classics.

Some top demo tapes in 5 words or less
GRAVEBOUND – "Stabbing Contest" tape
Noisy, destructive, brutal southern hardcore.
ALABASTER CHOAD – tape
Transgender art-fuck freedom.
THE MAX LEVINE ENSEMBLE – "Them Steadily Depressing Low Down Mind Messing Post Modern Recession Blues" tape
Punk greatly improved over time.
OPT OUT – tape
Insane, raging, manic hardcore.
TWAT SAUCE – "Clash Of the Tight Ones" tape
Female personification of Four Loko.
VACCUUM – demo tape
Treble laden, face punching insanity
BLOOD SUMMER – tape
Whiskey and sunglasses at night.
NO STATIK – 4 tracks demo tape
Fucking tougher than anything.

GRAHAM BOOTH

ALL OLD STUFF ALL THE TIME! There were a bunch of rad reissues and never-released ancient material to see light in 2010. It was hard to pick just ten, so I tried to focus on what I consider to be more solid bang for your buck releases.

THE EYES – "TAQN" 10" (Artifix)
Having listened to the Dangerhouse Records catalog for over fifteen years, the EYES are one of the few I still get visibly excited about. Inexplicably great pop punk keyboard wave can be stuck in your head for the next fifteen years too! On *big-hole* 10"

THE FINGERS "Isolation" EP (Last Laugh)
The best buy of 2010? $4000 worth of EP for around five bucks. All obscurity aside, "Isolation" is one of the top US Killed By Death punkers, and there isn't a sweaty collector in the world who won't wince at its mere mention.

HITLER SS / TAMPAX – split EP (bootleg)
Few *more* fucked up records exist. In one of the most stunning of reversals, it seems *we* are the morons and these Italians have been the geniuses all along.

INJECTIONS – "Prison Walls/Lies" (Last Laugh)
This jangly protest folk punker really blew off the doors for what I thought I wanted in a "punk" record. Loud guitars and gravelly vox sometimes have nothing to do with it.

MIKE REP ET LES QUOTAS – "Stupor Hiatus" 2xLP (Siltbreeze)
Ancient Columbus really came alive in 2010. Fitting, as MIKE REP was the world's first 21st Century Man.

PROTEX – "Strange Obsessions" LP (Sing Sing)
This LP has already caused a reshuffling to the annals of Irish punk history, and unlike THE UNDERTONES, PROTEX don't have decades of airbrushed glamour shots and soft rock solo careers to tarnish their undeniable pop legacy. *Damn you Sing Sing!*

RON HOUSE – "Blind Boy in the Backseat" LP (Columbus Discount)
That shoebox-full of '70s basement practice tapes may be worth money! The suspense is palpable: will Columbus Discount break even?

SCREAMERS "7-7-77: Pat Garrett Demos" LP (bootleg)
Honestly I haven't even listened to this yet. Just knowing it's out there is enough.

TUTU AND THE PIRATES – "Sub-Urban Insult Rock for the Anti/Lectual 1977-1979" LP (Factory 25)
Despite the tedious self-importance ascribed some 30 odd years later, this posthumous LP from Chicago's first punks actually delivers the goods and then some in all its pseudo offensive punksploito lo-fi shockery. *Actual* '70s Punk from Chicago?!

VOICE OF THE PUPPETS "I Don't Wanna Know/You're All I Wanted (And a Car)" (Sing Sing)
It's not often I get to hear an old punk record I've never heard of before, let alone a Storming Poppy UK two-sider like VOICE OF THE PUPPETS. Fucking Hell! I can still clearly recall the desire to throttle my friend who'd remarked, "Oh, that one? I'd wondered about it. Found one for a buck about a year ago." Needless to say, it is no longer ungoogleable…

AARON HALL

This year was awful in every way. It sucked for me personally, and most of the records I heard, and shows I saw were complete and total bullshit. Shove all that goth tinged post-punk up your ass, either that or people spent so much time trying to out distort/ear damage/blown out raw punk each other they forgot to write actual songs, and if you aren't SWANS or BRAINBOMBS, I sure as hell hope you aren't trying to sound like them next year. Anyways, most of these records probably aren't even that great, but they were better than the other things I heard. I was going to split this up into 7"s and 12"s, but I decided to just stick with ten things period, a few other records were really good this year, but it doesn't really matter.

SANGRAAL – "Fatal Coordinates" EP (Rock Cocaine)
Speaking of raw, this rotten, disease ridden limb of the GEHENNA family tree seemingly spared every expense on this thing and it still kicks ass all over most shit I heard. Filthy, deranged thrash metal for shit heads and filth hounds.

TALK IS POISON – Rage To Infinity EP (Self-released)
When I was in High School these guys were the shit. Well, they still are. Very nice to hear a Hardcore Punk album without any other nonsense mixed in, what a concept just writing good tunes with no gimmicks.

H-100S – "Live 1994" LP (SYG / Non-Commercial)
Not a ton of stuff to say about this, the recording is great, the band obviously rules, and the stage banter is the icing on the cake. Every goober out there has a crazy fucking hard on for any thing out of Cleveland these days, so I doubt I need to go into any more detail.

INEPSY – "Madness And Overkill" LP (Feral Ward)
Nice picture disc dudes. Despite the fact that these freaks decided to put this out on the kookiest of formats, this thing is a certified ripper. Actually, it might not be certified, but it is a ripper. Unlike a lot of uptight squares, I thought the last LP these dudes did was great, not really punk at all I guess, but who gives a shit, most of the crap in this zine seems like college kid tripe to me. This one finds a comfortable middle ground between *Rock n Roll Babylon* and *No Speed Limit*, meaning they have brought back more of a punk influence to their MOTORHEAD influenced style. It is my third favorite record of theirs after the other two records I mentioned. It would be the second favorite, but come on, a picture disc?

SICK-FUCKIN-O – "Sex Cells" EP (RSR)
Really nothing to get too excited about, this has the vocalist of VOORHEES, MEATLOCKER, etc… I like his voice. The music if you can't tell by the band name is influenced by INFEST. I don't really need much more than that, this also has a VOORHEES cover, I don't know if I even give a shit about that one way or the other. Like I said this isn't a game changer, knock you on your ass, buy or die killer. I liked it and this is my top ten, not fucking *Consumer Reports* or some shit.

KNIFE FIGHT – "Isolated" EP (Painkiller)
Considering I saw the singer/mastermind behind this band wearing Hawaiian print board shorts and an ANTI CIMEX shirt for a week straight, this is a surprisingly good record. I just reviewed this thing a little while ago; go read that. I don't know how to explain it, but I feel like a lot of the other KNIFE FIGHT records are "going for" a certain sound, where as this one is just a straight up crusher.

GASMASK TERROR – "Black Sun/Fake Gold" LP (Solar Funeral)
This is one of those bands I thought I hated, I don't why I thought that, but I blew it. This is a ferocious record; this guys voice is *tres* brutal. Get it, they're French. Sorry I'm getting burnt on describing shit. You know that DISHAMMER band? This is like that but better, see ya!

EXCRUCIATING TERROR – "Expression of Pain" LP (Insane Society)
There were a shit load of good reissues this year, I could have easily put ten of them in here, but I'll pick this one. Classic grind from LA, released on CD in the mid '90s, total no bullshit approach, current kooks trying to play this shit should take notes, et-fucking-cetera.

BASTARD NOISE – "A Culture Of Monsters" LP
BASTARD NOISE/ENDLESS BLOCKADE – split LP (Deep Six)
I'm not going to go on and on about these guys. Glad they are playing actual, uh, music again. One thing that stood out to me is the added level of brutality in the vocals, almost sounds like they're jamming with INCANTATION at times. The musicianship is off the charts on this, seriously mind blowing—you know this Eric dude can play the bass pretty well. Fuck it what am I supposed to say about this shit? It rules, I can only speak to their side of the split, as I don't care for the other band and only played it once.

LARM – LP (Way Back When)
Remember a few years back when SUICIDAL decided to rerecord their early shit? Well, this turned out a lot better. These songs were already classics, but these revamped versions are gnarly. A-LARM-ingly great stuff by some oldy moldy dudes, proving once again that "If it ain't Dutch, it ain't much."

LOGAN WORRELL

TALK IS POISON – "Rage to Infinity" EP (Self-released)
It's no secret that I love TALK IS POISON. In my opinion, they are one of the greatest hardcore bands in the last decade and I would challenge any naysayer to a dick sucking contest. It's not even because the bass player used to be my boss. And its not because the guitar player with the boots kinda scares me. It's just that good of a record. "Rage to Infinity" has been the most played song of the year for me by far. Over and over again once I got the record. You know I got that shit on blue vinyl too, girl. If you don't like the TIP, I hope you get hit by a car. "Keep the Peace" goes hard.

NERVESKADE – "Insanity/Forced to Live" (Iron Lung)
These dudes are soooooo cute. Kill it live and all, but fuck this record goes hard in the paint. Just a wall of chaotic noise. Why even compare it to other bands you like. Just fucking get it. Oh wait, you probably can't. Take a break from Viva la Vinyl, borrow mom's Volvo and hit the streets. I'm sure "Singles Going Steady" takes Visa debit cards. Ask for Jenson, he'll get ya sorted out. Huff a little glue, place on turntable, enjoy.

DESKONOCIDOS – "En La Oscuridad" LP (Todo Detruido / Trabuc)
Take a little SKINNY PUPPY. Sprinkle it with some THEATRE OF PAIN. Shit out a chocolate rainbow and there you have it—LP of the fucking year. What—you don't like catchy dark punk songs? You hate perfectly executed rhythm sections? Too punk for a disco breakdown (fuck you, it is disco)? Go ahead and eat shit. Doesn't matter that these dudes are my best friends in the world. My friends just so happen to be that good. I want KISS and DESKONOCIDOS to play my funeral. Plus if you don't like this record, I'm not sure, but I think some people might consider you a racist.

KRIEGSHÖG – LP (La Vida es un Mus / H:G Fact)
People who only like Japanese hardcore are idiots. It's great, don't get me wrong, but come on war brother, that's like saying you only like pizza when we all know goddamn well that your fat ass loves the shit out of some cheeseburgers too. Them hips don't lie. All jokes aside this record had to really grow on me. *Hardcore Hell* really set the bar high for me. That was the record of that year. Who knows what year though? I think like 1962 or something. Regardless, it's just punishing hardcore punk. Not d-beat, whatever that means. Hardcore punk. Somebody Urban Dictionary that shit.

TOTAL CONTROL – "Paranoid Video/Real Estate" (SmartGuy)
Guess what, TOTAL CONTROL made another smash hit. I had been on a big minimal wave kick around the time I had first heard this two song EP. Kinda gives me a heavy DEVO vibe but honestly, this is way darker then DEVO. It's hard to but my finger on. For sure somewhere between the old UK darkwave greats and SKINNY PUPPY, which I fully support. Would love to hear an LP soon. Who knows when that's gonna happen though. If you like this check out all those minimal wave comps that came out last year. I think you'll be pleased

VEINS – "04/16/2007" EP (Youth Attack)
Alright McCoy, here we go—first off, fuck you. Fuck CULT RITUAL, fuck black metal, fuck black cardigan sweaters, but goddamn I fucking love the shit out of you and goddamn do I love this fucking record. Most played record of the year for me. When I first heard the demo, I must have worn the tape out. It really is that good. Frankly, I don't wanna be the one to tell you guys how good it really is because I know all the kids on the message boards are doing it. But hey, I'm just a simple man who love fast as fuck, brutal hardcore. Berdan's voice effects me in the same way the John Brannon's did when I first heard it. Give me goosebumps. One more thing—if you got beef with Berdan you got beef with me and I'm real petty.

COMPLICATIONS – LP (Feral Ward)
Heavy KILLING JOKE vibe, but honestly I think it's a lot better. Catchier songs all in all. I love KJ, but shit, man, it's just more consistent. From what I hear, the bass player writes most of the lyrics. Super dark. Songs like KJ, lyrics like RUDI PENI. Truly beautiful. Features most of the members of BORN DEAN ICONS, except for Phil, who was, let's face it, the best one. I had to write the label to make sure it came out this year otherwise I was gonna be shit out of luck filling up this top 10. I'm pretty sure Mariam and Layla weren't gonna let the repress of *Double Live Gonzo* make the cut.

FOGNA – "Merda Come l'Oro" EP (Bat Shit)
Paco and I were talking about this the other day. He and I were just discussing what was gonna go on each other's top ten of the year and he turned me on to this record. Mind was blown. Got it as soon as I got back in the states. Amazing classic Itallian hardcore with a modern twist. Drum machines. I support em. I like NINE INCH NAILS too, so that's what's up. Record sounds like WRETCHED and who doesn't love WRETCHED? So stoked to hear more from this two piece. I just hope they don't fuck up and do some weak ass LP that Deranged puts out after he offers to buy them a van.

YOUNG OFFENDERS – "Leaders of the Followers" 12" (Deranged)
I'm not playing favorites here. Yes, Tim Brooks let me live in his basement, but that's not the point. Just to prove that I'm not playing favorites, I'll go ahead and talk a little shit. Dougie took a shit on a plate and tricked me into finding it. Who the fuck does that? What a fucking sociopath. Deranged put out this record too, but I'm not hating. All these bald assholes were promised a lifetime supply of Rogaine just to give the rights away. Can't blame em. We are in a recession after all. This record sounds like if that Steve Miller cover band playing at the bar down the street, decided to play super wimpy street punk for the night. Don't kid yourself—this is a dad band.

SUDOR / CRIMEN DE ESTADO – split LP (Mal Sonido)
Both these bands are probably some of the only- actually, the only- punk bands in the world. Ugly, stupid, and raw as hell. Got the opportunity to see them both this year and if I was the kind of asshole who had to have a top ten shows of 2010 list along with his top ten 7"'s of 2010 list, to accompany his top ten LPs of 2010 list, I'd put both these bands on it. For sure. There is no real point in comparing either of these raging Spanish hardcore punk bands to anything else. To say ESKORBUTO would be a cop out, just like

it would be with most classic Spanish punk bands. Total bullshit. I love it. It was put out by them and was made of mostly stolen materials. Don't get much more punk then that.

Honorable Mention:
THE YOUNG – "Voyagers of Legend" LP
This record is not reviewable by *MRR*. It was released by a label who has major label ties. That sucks, but this record doesn't. I love it. Imagine if the MARKED MEN got down with HAWKWIND. Catchy, drugged-out fuzz punk. This record will take you on a trip. Don't buy it. Download it. Fuck. They wouldn't care.

Dishonorable Mention:
T.H.U.G – LP
When this record first came to *MRR*, I think I can safely say that a whole bunch of us were pretty stoked. Heard it had a ROSE TATTOO connection. Don't be fooled. This a white power record. Do not buy this. These people are worthless pieces of shit. Do not buy anything that comes out on this label. They all knew about it and after a little investigation, we here at *MRR* finally made the connection. If you wanna buy a 5th generation SKREWDRIVER record, that's your business, but please do not support this. It's not cool. It's not funny. It's a bunch of 40 year-old Australian "Rock Against Communism" racist cowards.

ALEX RATCHARGE

I spent half the year sucking on cancer lollipops in Melbourne and the other half writing fanzines in Lyon, so that must be reflected in the following lists somehow. No order, disorder, (almost) no classifications, these are just some of the records that rocked my world in 2010. Apart from those, the bands I listened to most this year were ELECTRIC EELS and JOHN COLTRANE.

TEN BIG RECORDS.
GASMASK TERRÖR – "Black Sun/ Fake Gold" (I Feel Good/ Solar Funeral)
This record isn't pissraw, nor is it shit-fi, nor does it sound like a "practice space recording" like some members of the band want you to believe, but it sure is one hell of a raw as shit intense punk record. Tight, bleak, pessimistic d-beat driven raw punk by a band that's getting better with each release. Their secret? Drummer is one of the five biggest DISCHARGE fans I know of, guitarist is a killer riff-machine, singer is some nihilistic homesick for hell black metal cunt. Best d-beat record since TOTALITÄR's last album.

PUFFY AREOLAS – "In the Army 1981" LP (Siltbreeze)
Raw power 70s guitars, tensed atmosphere, great vocalist, sick artwork, hardcore garage and creepy free noise in a broken blender. For fans of failure and nightmares.

CRIMEN DE ESTADO/ SUDOR – split LP (Mal Sonido)
Both bands earlier 7"s were alright, but this is something else entirely—HC played by early 2010s Spanish anarchists with the rage and velocity of early '80s Italy. When CRIMEN DE ESTADO's vocalist imitates the guitar riff on their first song, my head makes a hole in the walls. Think IMPACT, WRETCHED, INDIGESTI. Don't think. Destroy.

CIRCLE PIT – "Bruise Constellation" LP (Siltbreeze)
At the end of the day I don't care how these people dress, who they fuck, what they snort or what major label will end up signing them—fact is they put out an amazing 7" a while ago and their debut album is a great follow up to that. Junkie bedroom queer classic grunge rock my ass, songs kill, melodies squat my soul for days, "Another Trick" could be on heavy rotation on the radio, "Hurricane" makes me want to ride a motorbike in the Australian void, and the rest of the tunes make me feel like finding myself a degenerated partner to stay naked in bed with all day shooting dope. I won't, ok, I'll just listen to this instead.

DE HØJE HÆLE – "Skal Vi Aldrig Videre?" LP (Hjernespind)
It's a mystery to me how these guys smoke so much weed and still end up shitting out songs this energetic and catchy. And that's the key word here: catchy. Hit after hit of KBD, *Bloodstains Across Finland* inspired Danish punk rock'n'roll genius with clean guitars, amazing songwriting, lyrics about UFOs and soccer players plus enough energy to replace your morning coffee. Most of these songs were already released on other formats (mostly tapes) but the clean well-produced recording here really makes it completely worth it.

PASSION ARMÉE – LP (Self-released)
While most of of us were discussing records and food, these guys were busy trying to find ways to raise money for prisoners in their city, arguing about Michel Foucault and generally being a bunch of confrontational, hard to deal with individuals, and I mean that in the best possible kind of way. They released this record shortly before calling it a day, so it really didn't get the distribution it deserved and copies are still floating around all over Lyon. Clean-sounding hi-fi French anarcho dark-wave by people who actually meant what they were singing about: "No peace, we believe in conflict. No peace, ever." RIP motherfuckers.

EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING – "Rush To Relax" LP (Goner)
Yeah, sure some of the lyrics suck balls, it isn't as great as *Primary Colors*, etc, but it's a killer record nonetheless and odds are you already know that.

FIRMEZA 10 – "El Grito De La Tierra" LP (Self-released)
Just when I thought GASMASK TERRÖR was gonna be the only straight-up DISCHARGE inspired band that mattered this year, this record showed up in the mail two weeks before 2011 and I had to remove the new TYVEK album from this list. Sorry TYVEK. There's something about FIRMEZA 10 that transcends words, trends, music, politics; this band just feels so human, so sincere and so genuinely pissed off that listening to their records is sending shivers down my spine. The sound is slightly more "produced," a bit less raw than their first LP, waaay less raw than their demo but then again what could be rawer than that? No bass, simple riffs, one drum-beat (the drum-beat) and insanely angry vocals make this sound like the voice of the people against everything that is wrong and inhuman in this shitsystem. Great homemade/ screenprinted artwork, as always.

THE SECRET PROSTITUTES – "Nevermind the KBD this is ADD" LP (Bad Hair Life)
Oh Allah, fuck, EPPU NORMAALI styled Finnish punk filtered through Texas and Indonesia, do I need to say more? I've never heard someone sing like that. I've never wanted to drink indo-cola with a band before, but I so wanna see these mortherfuckers live and wear leather and burn KBD comps with them. Now someone repress more than 400 copies of this, please.

HOME BLITZ – "Out of Phase" LP (Richie)
Even I am surprised this made the list as I don't owe a hard copy of the record, but I gotta admit I spent a fair amount of hours listening to these songs on my shitty mp3 player (I ain't rich enough to be one of you Apple posers yet) while walking the streets of Melbourne looking for a job or something cheap to do (doesn't exist over there, it seems). Sweet dirty pop songs mixed with noisy intros, written by some kind of songwriting genius who's not afraid to actually sing. A winner for fans of Terminal Boredom hamburger garage-pop as well as their supposed antithesis (you're gonna hate me), Plan-It-X vegan pop-punks.

TEN SMALL RECORDS.
CRAZY SPIRIT – "Burning Churches" EP (Toxic State)
This is what 2010 sounded like—freaked out, hostile, dark, angsty, angry. There's no point comparing these guys to other bands—they've got their own thing going, creating their own brand of flawless raw fucked up sound with gnarly demented vocals, unidentified yet completely killer drums falling somewhere in between DISCHARGE-beat and more tribal war rhythms, a sound that's modern while staying deeply rooted in the long tradition of international HC punk completed with amazing home-made screenprinted artwork bringing to mind doing cheap speed in dark alleys, tiny spraypainted basements with broken lights, invoking spirits and being eaten alive in a big grey city invaded by bugs. The only USHC band that mattered this year.

FOLDED SHIRT – "Fifteen Year Old Kids" EP (Fashionable Idiots)
Describing why this record is good would be like describing why a joke is funny; once you do it stops being funny, so what's the point? Those who get it don't get it. Blah.

ROYAL HEADACHE – "Eloise" EP (RIP Society)
Best feel-good record in ages. Perfect songs, perfect sound, primal, dirty garage punk with a mindblowing soul influenced singer. Can't wait for the LP.

UV RACE – "Knife Fight" EP (Fashionable Idiots)
Watching this band play is like watching some dreamy experimental punk-rock movie. Listening

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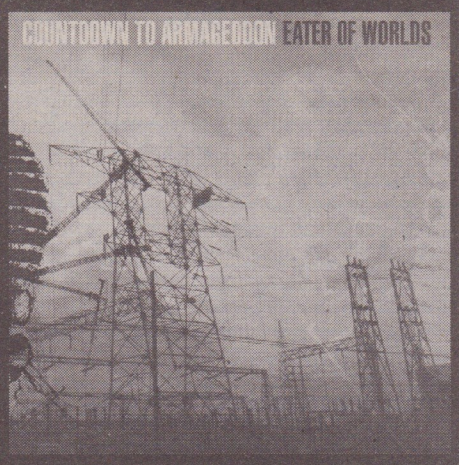

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to their records makes watching TV useless. So entertaining, inventive, constantly changing, yet unpretentious and undeniably punk.

HYGIENE – "Fixed Odds Betting Terminal/ Things That Dreams Are Made Of" (La Vida Es Un Mus)
Great band, great label, great song (originally by THE HUMAN LEAGUE). Catchy, sloppy, typically British post-modern urban post-punk. Damn.

PERIPHERIQUE EST – "Démos Volume 2" (Rob's House)
Finally. Ramones. French vocals. Perfect sound forever. Rock'n'roll. Aïe, sold out.

INSERVIBLES – "Demo" EP (Shogun)
Evil, menacing, brutal garage, or is it hardcore? It is, but who cares. Some people from this Mexican band also released the *Brutales Matanzas* comp LP this year, and you should ask your nerdy friend to lend it to you, then disappear and make new friends somewhere else.

LAS SEÑORAS – "Digitacion" (Sólo Para Punks)
Catchy, energetic Spanish synth punk, for fans of SILLA ELECTRICA and the *Matado Por La Muerte* comp. Two songs, three minutes, bedroom successfully destroyed.

V/A–100 BANDS (Nhdiystrec)
Years in the making, a hundred bands on a single 7". If you've ever tried to put out a comp you know raising these babies is thankless hard work, but there's more to it here: Christophe, who runs the label Nhdiystrec, is the most obsessed noise freak I've ever met —dude simply lives and breathes for fucked up cacophonous unmusical sounds, to the point where he never has money for food because he puts it all in helping obscure as shit bands release records like this one. He hand-drew the covers and booklet in his own unique style, making this thing look and sound like it comes from another dimension.

LEXOMYL – tape
Yes this is cheating, this isn't even a record but it's the only thing they released in 2010 and since it compiles their two out of print 7" I figured, fuck it. Perfect melodic French punk that crosses the bridge between french KBD shit and PDX rain-punks from the WIPERS to the OBSERVERS. Best local band, best songs, best people.

CHRIS CORRY

12"

LOW THREAT PROFILE – "Product #2" LP (Deep 6)
My understanding is that this LP just snuck its way into the end of the year, becoming for sale officially 12/28/10, so it's going straight to the top of my list. Fifteen songs, that all fit in with their previously awesome 7" except the last song pretty well. Members of INFEST, NO COMMENT, and LACK OF INTEREST... delivering more or less what you'd expect, although, a lot of songs remind me of *Art Of Ballistics* era CAPITALIST CASUALTIES as well. This type of music has been my bread and butter since I was a fresh faced teen and I still love it.

INEPSY – "Madness and Overkill" MLP (Feral Ward)
I'm a simple guy. Give me some good riffs and a solid gold chorus and I'm pretty happy. I've loved INEPSY for a long time because they basically do all of the aforementioned. MOTORHEAD, GBH, VENOM, VARUKERS, motorcycles, substance abuse, apocalypse... Sad to say this is only half an album's worth of material but it's as good as all the great records they've done before it.

HARVEY MILK – "A Small Turn of Human Kindness" LP (Hydra Head)
I knoooow the rules are punk only releases on this list but this is sludge and noise soaked enough that I'm placing it in my top ten, and as I say every time one of these lists gets made, with all the stupid twinkle-pop and epic crust that will be making the other lists, I feel totally justified. This is an awful downer of an album, but it's powerful and beautiful, and uncompromised. About 40 minutes of molasses speed blues and feedback. Don't take a warm bath after you play this album.

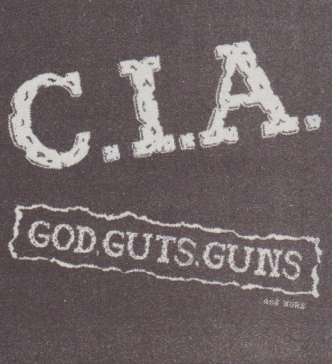
H100S – "Live" LP (Non-Commercial)
It took a while for this to come out, but holy crud this lives up to, and at times surpasses the band's studio output. A band that could explain the human condition in the most basic terms – "I was born, so now I suffer." A band that could probably be responsible for you leaving with a concussion. A real expression of punk isolation and hate. Most live records end up proving the band could talk the talk, but not walk the walk, for once this shows a band that did both.

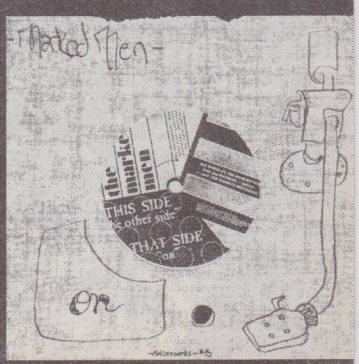
GAS CHAMBER – 12" (Warm Bath)
Ex-RUNNING FOR COVER crew reconvenes for a new band that mucks around in the same waters, thrashing power violence, oppressive noise, eerie contemplative moments... It's weird how coherent they can make this stuff. I like it too because while their influences are as plain as day to me, it's more than just a CROSSED OUT / MITB refit. In fact it's not that at all, there's a distinct flavor this band has all to itself. One of the best debuts of recent times. If you like "extreme music" you must hear this.

SLANG – "Life Made Me Hardcore" LP (Straight Up / Prank)
Here's the kind of straight ahead Japanese hardcore that I always can welcome more of. I got to see these guys play live every night for about ten days and this album perfectly replicates their live intensity. It actually just replicates their live configuration; no tricks or studio magic. Heavy, thunderous d-beatery with distinctly Japanese style vocals (barking – powerful – authoritative – intimidating), a touch of heavy metal in all the right places, pro-level musicianship from all parties, and yea—Joe Petagno cover art on the LP sleeve. Everything good about HC as far as I'm concerned.

KAIBOUSHITSU – LP (H:G Fact))
Here's something nice. New material from Crow (of CROW) but more in line with old Japan punk-metal like GASTUNK and LAUGHING NOSE. Eerie sung vocals mixing with galloping metallic riffs and good hardcore parts. Lots of catchy little licks in the songs on this one and it's a nice throwback to a style that doesn't get revisited as much in this day and age. Spooky and refreshing in these times where there's 100 bands a week from the US and Japan that sound like GLOOM (or just think they do). As I've revisited this album through the year I find it to be very rich and rewarding each time. Some records are like junk-food which tastes great going down but leaves you a bit empty. This is like flavorful and diverse meal that you're still thinking about a couple hours after dinner. May I say track six has a lovely little guitar hook? There I said it.

THE BASTARD NOISE – "A Culture of Monsters" LP (Deep 6)
This album will probably make a lot of year-enders in this mag. It's a pretty stunning return from 3/4s of the core of MAN IS THE BASTARD. Whatever the motives may be behind it, and despite it containing two reworked Cyclops tracks, it's hard to argue that this album is anything other than a colossal achievement in all departments. An expression of hate, love, fear, and righteousness that few bands will ever have the wherewithal to





undertake, I find myself stunned again and again when I put this record on at just the depth of it. It's also probably the most technically accomplished work I can think of by this crew from both the production and performance side.

SQRM – "Rodeo" LP (Youth Attack)
Self loathing and general anomie have driven musicians for time out of mind, but it takes something extra to really go all the way with getting in touch with those feelings in an honest and believable way. These are the cornerstones of the human experience that we all understand. *Rodeo* is a true expression of disgust and personal degradation. Unfortunately so many bands are faking their way through the same minefield of cliché some folks probably won't even bother with this one. I recommend this though if you ever related to the sounds of KIL(L) (-SLUG; -DOZER).

KIELTOLAKI – "Masshypnoosi" LP (Feral Ward)
Meat or Potatoes? "WHY" don't you have another plateful? Here's something to satisfy your appetite for the timeless sounds of raging Finn/Scandi D-Beating and skull smashing. Maybe you've heard it all before but when it's done this well it's always something to appreciate and admire. It's hard to make a good punk album, but I guess Kieltolaki can make it look kinda easy.

7"

TALK IS POISON – "Rage to Infinity" EP (self-released)
One of the better bands of the '90s who've aged remarkably well for their timely return with a new EP of material, virtually indistinguishable from their classic output. TALK IS POISON were one of the first groups outside the straight edge HC bubble that I checked out in my youth and they've remained a favorite since then. I don't really know what to even say except that I think this is a group that obviously still have great chemistry together and demonstrate everything great about American HC/punk.

BATTLE RUINS – "Blood Eagle" (Rock N Roll Disgrace)
Technically this is four of the tracks from this band's 2009 demo which was technically recorded mostly in 2008. Nonetheless 2010 was the first most folks heard of BATTLE RUINS. Hard Oi mixing w/ NWOBHM sounds like it could be an awful concoction but they've somehow navigated the dangerous waters that a description such as that would suggest. I find it pretty revealing that this record has been praised as much by genre enthusiasts as by people who ordinarily don't listen to any of the styles influencing this record.

CAPITALIST CASUALTIES / LACK OF INTEREST – split EP (6 Weeks)
Two classics coming together to prove they can still annihilate all who stand in their path. This is actually some of the best CAPITALIST CASUALTIES stuff I've heard in a little while sounding not much different from their *Disassembly Line* era. Raging and excellent thrash. LACK OF INTEREST introduces the newest configuration of their ever changing lineup, with Chris Dodge taking care of stringed instruments, Bob Deep 6 as always on drums, and Mike and Rick who've been in and out of the band at various times, now both sharing vocal duties. While this doesn't quite reach the level of perfection that can be heard on *Take Another Step*, it's always good to hear new LOI.

KNIFE FIGHT – "Isolated" EP (Painkiller)
I've always been a KNIFE FIGHT fan, and I feel this is probably my favorite recording by the band that should really just have been called Jon Westbrook's KNIFE FIGHT, since their debut 7". Here things are faster than they've been in a while, but also heavier almost into early RIPCORD territory which it oughta be since they mined the same influence set.

URBAN BLIGHT – "Total War" EP (Static Shock)
Continuing on with the raw-fi approach of last year's 12" but sharpening the songwriting a few degrees. Heavy early NY-style hardcore like the ABUSED and the Tommy Rat fronted version of WAR ZONE, but amping up the fuzz as much as possible. No curve balls here, but if you enjoy the aforementioned and related you can't go wrong with this bloody little ripper.

NERVSKADE – "Insanity/Forced to Live" 7" (Iron Lung)
I really don't have a lot of time for "Noise-Core" these days, but this band find a way to totally make it work. I guess they do have the current day "noise not music" chainsaw guitar and ramshackle drums approach that a lot of bands take, but it's got an x-factor. Something more intense or urgent. Excessive energy. It almost comes off like a crustier version of HERESY's *Never Healed* flexi which is no easy feat. Where this band really excels is in a live setting. I was absolutely not expecting anything from them, and watched them dominate a stage better than many seasoned pros, but this single gets as close to that experience as a record can.

VACCINE – "Human Hatred" EP (Painkiller)
Ten songs, about five minutes, straight edge HC that pretty much sounds like what you might guess given the title is *Human Hatred*. For a record that is basically "power violence" I enjoy the off kilter drumming choices and often non-linear song structures. I can feel the uncompromisingly straight edge lyrical content too, which I frankly find a breath of fresh air for bands playing this style. Don't sweat it if that makes you wary of this record, there's plenty of other targets that the band take aim at, but they probably don't want you to like them anyway.

FREE SPIRIT – "Free Yourself" EP (BBB)
It's pretty normal now that every footnote hardcore band that was around twenty years ago has a band citing them specifically as a primary influence in 2010. I'm not that old, but in the hardcore wilderness of my younger days it was something pretty exciting to meet other people that shared my enthusiasm for bands like STRAIGHT AHEAD, OUR GANG, KRAKDOWN, etc. So I have to say it warms my heart to hear such a faithful tribute to the glory days of NYHC as FREE SPIRIT on this 7", and I really have to say they have the riffs and style to back it up. It's easy to claim that you love the *New Breed* comp and that you're trying to sound of that era, it's another thing entirely to get this close. It's good to know there are at least some modern HC bands that don't sound like a car commercial.

AGE – "Survive" EP (Black Water)
I think this is my metallic Japanese HC pick for the year. Continuing in line with AGE's other recent releases like their split with HELLSHOCK and *The Scar of Lead* 12", this brings you into raging metal-zone bliss half-way between WHIPLASH *Power and Pain* and CHAOS UK *Short Sharp Shock*. Heir to the throne of bands like CROW and SDS, AGE has really proven themselves over time to be a tier 1 band with one ripping release after another, always upping the ante just a little more. Can't wait for another full album

Honorable Mention:
AUTOPSY – "The Tomb Within" (Peaceville)
This is a metal release but Autopsy have always been very influenced by hardcore bands, and their raw delivery, obsession with death, and general love of Jesus Christ Allin hammers it home for me personally. Yea this is metal I guess, but it's also 2010, and the distinction is slight at best. Punk metal might be a better description. The opening track is the best AUTOPSY song in quite some time, already better than most of *Acts of the Unspeakable* and definitely more memorable than *Shitfun*. Basement grime and mildew caked on to primitive driving riffs that devolve into the sounds of dooming dread... hanging in the air like the stench of a putrefied corpse. I'm all outta hyperbole - this record is good - it's punk enough for me. Fuck it.

TIM BROOKS

I bought less new punk records this year than I have in a while, mostly because staring at a roomful of records I don't have time to listen to makes me feel like I shouldn't buy more!! The ones on this list are the ones I pulled out from memory… or the ones I just haven't stopped listening to. This isn't a science; I probably missed a bunch of good shit, and forgot others. If you don't have these ten I'd suggest getting them…

SKIN LIKE IRON – " Descent Into Light" LP (Six Feet Under)
Third or fourth year in a row these Oakland boys have made the cut. One of the few bands that is in constant rotation round my yard. Few things can top their last LP, but this shit is crushing hardcore—like a mix of INTEGRITY and TERROR. So heavy and mean. Love. It.

EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING – "Rush To Relax" LP (Goner)
Wasn't totally sold when I got this, but on repeated listens and seeing them live this summer this record has become one of my favorites. Hypnotic, driving punk with as much influence by the FALL as anything else, which suits me fine. Good looking fellas too.

COMPLICATIONS – LP (Feral Ward)
People were talking this up like it was the next LEATHERFACE which sounded like snoozeville to me… Turns out it's like the natural progression from BORN DEAD ICONS. Melodic, but tough, gruff vocals and mangled English. I have battered this record. So good.

TERROR – "Keepers Of The Faith" LP (Reaper)
For some reason I have listened to this LP more than any other this year. Not a band that gets much play in this rag. For some reason this just hit the spot. Super heavy beatdown hardcore. They do it better than anyone else. I think this is their best LP. "Don't say a word / Don't need a reason why / Just point them out / Your enemies are mine."

VAASKA – Ruido Hasta La Muerte" LP (540)
Ripping hardcore from the Texan wastelands. My adopted son plays bass…. It had to go in. Luckily it's a great fuckin' record.

KRIEGSHOG – LP (La Visa es un Mus/H:G Fact)
One of the most anticipated releases of the year and it didn't disappoint. Crazed blown out Japanese hardcore—like DISCHARGE through blown speakers. This LP is mental.

NERVESKADE – LP (Black Water)
For some reason this year was all about extremities for me. This band take the blown out sound of DISORDER and CONFUSE, but have such a great drummer it adds a NAPALM DEATH/HERESY intensity… killer. Best track is the one with the fuckin' dentist drill in it… Arrrrghhhhhhhhhhhhh.

GLAM – "Duelo de Titanes" EP (La Vida es un Mus)
Ripping Spanish hardcore... Almost a good as DESTINO FINAL. Almost.

AIRFIX KITS – "Flex Time" EP (Deranged) / "Playing Both Sides" EP (Dirtnap)
Can't choose between them. Love everything by this band…..it's like all those no-mark DIY UK bands if they were good. TV PERSONALITIES mixed with GANG OF FOUR and fuckin Trainspotting…. The sound of a Glasgow council estate.

RIVAL MOB – "Hardcore For Hardcore" EP (Six Feet Under)
Favorite hardcore 7" of '10 by a mile… Boston kids taking it to the next level, fast and loose hardcore like DYS on speed—so gooood. Raw Life!

PANOS ASTHMA

Another year, another bunch of records stole my cash and took up more space in my small messed up room. As it usually happens some were long forgotten and the majority of my fave albums for 2010 weren't released that year and can't even be labeled punk. Still, the following list left its mark on my tortured ears and are well worth your attention.

LP AND TAPE ALBUMS
KRIEGSHÖG – LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
Have you ever taken a shower with boiling water? Have you ever slept in a case covered with 6000 wet cockroaches? Have you ever crashed with a plane? Have you ever dated a cop? Have you ever visited Athens, Greece? Have you ever driven around without your glasses despite your myopia of eight or more degrees? If not, listen to this album and you'll catch the feeling of all these and of a bunch of other nightmares! Nightmarish and fiery like hell!

YUSSUF JERUSALEM –. "A Heart Full of Sorrow" LP (Born Bad)
Jerusalem belongs to Yussuf. Yussuf is a skinny, ugly and heartbroken boy who had to express his depression and anger to get even. Via emotional-garage pop noise, he managed to tear Jerusalem apart like a latter day Charles Manson. If you harbor Christian feelings deep inside then this is the Mass of the year 2010.

CRIMEN DE ESTADO / SUDOR – split LP (Mal Sonida)
If Skinheads had grown their hair long then Oi would have sounded like CRIMEN DE ESTADO. For long haired ex-skinheads who want to keep their hair clean and free of dandruff, then "SUDOR" shampoo is the only choice.

TOTAL ABUSE – "Mutt" LP (PPM)
Drugged hardcore made by retarded US bastard sons. During their childhoods they suffered from serious bullying that left them emotionally scarred. Now, from emo-whining kids, they became hated-wannabes but I swear to their US god that if they don't come up with an album, at least as good as this one, then they better place their dads' shotguns in their mouth. Otherwise I'll feed 'em with a White and Proud Feta Cheese till they die from Asphyxia… Feta and Honor.

DRUNKDRIVER – LP (Self-released)
This is a drink and drive record. If you don't own it yet, then don't search for it or download it. Drink three bottles of frozen vodka, mix it with some Tequila shots and hit the highway in your car. I am sure that DRUNKDRIVER's music will come to your head right as you crash in a pile on the motorway.

VAASKA – "Ruido Hasta La Muerte" LP (540)
Like the dirty socks you've been wearing for over a month now but still you can't get yourself to change. It's not boredom. You just enjoy having something stinky in yer feet.

NO TALK – "Leather Discipline" LP (Death Exclamations)
This is a Texan immoral proposition, with a unique and authentic approach to male mentality. A Dionysian anthem about male pride and self-destruction. Recommended to guys with three legs.

DOUBLE NEGATIVE – "Daydreamnation" LP (Sorry State)
Can you get stoned on iced triple espresso? If not, you must be drinking the wrong blend of coffee or may be you are not putting enough ice.

KYLMA SOTA – "Ten Tracks" LP (Feral Ward)
It was never difficult for me to stop eating meat as I'd never been a fan of cooked flesh. But this record woke my Sarcofago feelings again. It made me go out and chase moving animals. I'd love to see what effect these ten tracks will have on you.

Honorable Mention:
BONE AWL – "Bowing Heads" Tape (Seed Stock)
BONE AWL is a mental disorder, characterized by an all-encompassing low mood accompanied by low self-esteem, and by loss of interest or pleasure in normally enjoyable activities. The disease is still incurable. Sometimes patients are treated with pseudo-medication and hospitalization may be necessary in cases with associated self-neglect or a significant risk of harm to self or others. At the end of the day, the only true release for the patient is suicide.

EPs and DEMO TAPES
LOVE POTION – "Intimacy" EP (Hate Ape)
If Amsterdam's Red Light District, it's coffee shops and all it's street junkies moved to Copenhagen, Denmark. Four local punks formed the band LOVE POTION, to celebrate this spectacular event. *Intimacy*, is their homage to the K-Town Mayor, for doing such a great job. In recognition, the mayor declared the tracks of this EP official anthems of the first gay pride parade of 2010 in Copenhagen.

GLAM – "Duelo de Titanes" EP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
I know you love to take a shit. You like it short, fast and loud, cause you dig screaming when your hard-fat turd is released. Even if it stinks, even if you become shy when others find out that you had a killer time in your WC, deep inside you know that you cant wait till the next call of nature. GLAM's hardcore is exactly that, your next best crap! Hard as fuck and breathtaking and it keeps the annoying mob away! The way hardcore was meant to be.

VILE GASH – "Life Rot" EP (Youth Attack)
You dream about your mom getting laid with your best friend. You wake up. You walk to her room and realize that her bed-screams were not a nightmare. Then you listen to VILE GASH and you reach for your gun. USHC styled like a US crime!

CROW – "Vertigo/Occupied Japan" EP (Prank)
CROW Rock'n'Roll Engines, is a division of Japan's heavy industry that produces motor-noise, head-banging, riot-boots and general-purpose gasoline habits. Before 2010, CROW were known for their powerful and uptight performances and services. Last year they managed to remain at the top, once again defending their reputation. Their slogan always was, is and will forever be, "Let the good times cause blood!"

CRAZY SPIRIT – "Burning Churches" EP (Toxic State)
Greece has feta, sun, pissed off punks and ouzo, Russia has vodka and Neo-Nazis, Cyprus has nothing, Germany has money and beer, Italy has mafia and good spaghetti, Tennessee has Jack Daniels, and New York has CRAZY SPIRIT. CRAZY SPIRIT, is a semi synthetic psychedelic quartet, spawn from Brooklyn. CRAZY SPIRIT is addictive and known to cause psychological effects, which can include altered thinking processes, closed and open eye visuals, an altered sense of time and spiritual experiences.

ACID BABY JESUS – "I Am a Baby/Salt Chunk Mary" (Sound Effect) and demo tape (Self-released)
When you are starving, you just need to eat *something* irrespective of what this is. If you also need to listen to something really good, then try these guys here. Enough said.

ELECTRIC FUNERAL – "In League With Darkness" and "D-Beat Noise Attack" demo tapes
Ugly like human's birth. Sweet like your enemies death.

TOP REISSUES
CRISIS – "Hymns of Faith" LP (LEUM)
METRO DECAY – "Υπέρβαση" LP and "Brand New Day" EP (Eirkti)
DISARM – "Discography 1982-1987" DLP (D-Takt RA-Punk)
VARAUS – "1/1" LP (Feral Ward)
OHLO SECO – "Botas Fuzis Capacetes" EP (Nada Nada)
BRAINBOMBS – "Obey" LP (Armageddon) and "Fucking Mess" LP (Lystring)
FREESTONE – "Church/Bummer Bitch" EP (Last Laugh)
CHRONIC SICK – "s/t" EP (No Way)
GLUEAMS – "Discography" LP (Static Age)

TOP LIVE ACTS 2010 in Athens
DESTINO FINAL, DAVILA 666, GBH, INQUISITION, RAVENCULT, SAINT VITUS, ACID BABY JESUS and CRUDE.

TONY GUNNARSSON

The following list is presented with the not-insignificant-disclaimer that, at the time of writing, I have not yet had the opportunity to play the new FIRMEZA-10 LP, which no doubt would have made it to very top.

KYLMA SOTÄ – "10 Tracks" LP (Feral Ward)
Finland's answer to DISCLOSE. Ten tracks in ten minutes, no bullshit. Incredibly great raw punk, perhaps the best hardcore band in the world right now.

GIFTGASATTACK – "Noise Hero" LP (D-Takt and Råpunk)
When people hear this LP, I will finally be vindicated for having written and talked so much about GIFTGASATTACK in the last year: Make no mistake about it, this is the Why? 12" of 2010 even if it does come with some modern noise and a corny album title.

HERÄTYS – LP (Not Enough) & "Helvettiin Ja Takaisin" EP (La Familia)
The LP is the best music of all genres that I heard in 2010. I believe I have played the record daily since the lucky day when it arrived at my house in March. I was honestly a little less in love with the subsequent 7" EP, but seriously how many bands are there today that are only in direct competition with themselves? It is my hope that I will get to see HERÄTYS play live at least four times in 2011. On that note, here's a call for some smart people to arrange a HERÄTYS England tour for the summer!

CHAOS CHANNEL – "How You'd Never Been So High (But Then You'd Never Needed To Be?)" CD (Juke Boxxx)
Thirteen retarded noise-punk songs with digital drums, distortion-to-hell guitar, a singer who sounds like Mickey Mouse on LSD, pop punk bass lines and samples from CHAOTIC DISCHORD! This may not sound like the description of the only future classic punk rock album of 2010 but I mean it. It can perhaps only be compared to the last PAINTBOX album when it comes to playing with the boundaries and means of hardcore punk. Very very few bands today are doing that. But above all this is really great album from start to finish! A modern punk rock classic simply put! And you'll come to recognize this when the LP version comes in 2011.

KRIEGSHÖG – LP (H:G Fact/ La Vida es un Mus)
The best Japanese HC album since the FRAMTID 12" or BASTARD LP? This is the shape of raw punk to come.

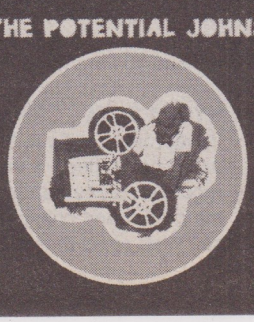
CRAZY SPIRIT – demo tape and "Burning Churches" EP
You know why CRAZY SPIRIT is mentioned here. So instead of stating the obvious I will also say that I particularly love the DAWN OF HUMANS 7".

CHAOS DESTROY – "Collection Not Collection" LP (SPHC), LOTUS FUCKER / WANKYS – split EP (Katorga Works/SPHC), NU-KLE-ER BLAST SUNTAN – "Blot out the Worthless Sun" LP (SPHC)
Three great new hardcore bands that shared a passionate commitment to play forward-looking hardcore punk in 2010. CHAOS DESTROY play noise-punk a la CONFUSE and the SWANKYS but exaggerating the clichés of the sub-genre to such an extent that you have to smile. "Noise, noise and more noise." This LP was one of my highlights of the year. Comparably Lotus Fucker is a more conventional hardcore band, in that the focus is speed and actual songs, but conventional is the last word to describe Lotus Fucker. The LP indicates a love unequal of "international hardcore" like the classic Italians, Finns and Japanese. But Lotus Fucker never sound like a hardcore that you have heard before. This is in itself amazing, as it happens their music is great for playing while making pizza, reading novels and for making love (all tested and approved by your truly). NBS is more of the classic crust vein, but much more hysterical, over-the-top and impulsive than the modern crust style that we have all come to accept (and some of us despise). Up the future hardcore punx!

DOUBLE NEGATIVE – "Daydreamnation" LP (Sorry State)
I might be living under a rock over here but I had not heard about this band until I placed the needle on the vinyl. It was so truly great that I ended up playing it over and over and over again. I still do. And apart from POISON IDEA, I can't stand all the talk about US HC. But this is a great record.

YDINASEETON POHJOLA – LP (Nightstick Justice)
Finland's answer to INDIGESTI, NEGAZIONE, RAW POWER, WRETCHED, etc. Fucking great! They even have the best slogan in hardcore: "When man turns 35 it's time to play hardcore" (!!!) (Note to *MRR* readers, also applicable to women, please!)

STATE POISON – LP (Flower of Carnage)
France's answer to the SWANKYS (cf the 7" EP) became a three-piece when Alex Ratcharge resigned and in one move the band became France's answer to GAUZE and ACID (Japan). There is a lot of clever things on this LP but so far I have just been sitting back enjoying the hardcore punk beats, so I'll leave the deconstruction analysis to you. Buy this today!



WILL KINSER

THE ESTRANGED – "Subliminal Man" LP (New Dark Age/Dirtnap)
This record is as perfect as any I've ever heard. THE ESTRANGED have fully developed their sound, and this record are no mere replica of other classic bands. This record has everything you could want from a full length. Great song structures, lots of variation, and tons of dynamic in sound. I am honored to have been a small help with its release.

SPECTRES – "Last Days" LP (New Dark Age/ Whisper in Darkness)
Some people say this record is beholden too much to its influences. However I would argue that other bands, which are praised by many contributors in this zine are but a step away from plagiarists, but they still get loads of credit. Like it or not the sound that they have chosen is a hard one to perfect and they do it very well. SPECTRES set a mood that is cold, dreary, and unrelenting. The record is filled with repetition and simplicity but also with twists and turns that hold the listener's interest.

YOUNG OFFENDERS – "Leaders of the Followers" LP (Deranged)
These yobs are alright. A bit behind the times because this record could easily make a 1978 top ten, but don't speak that in public. You right deserve a smack in the head. This record just proves that men with taste and style can still deliver a great recording 25 years after all their mates said it was over. This record is so deadly it will make you want to crawl back into your mum's womb. Ewww. But seriously the songs are so great. Love it. (Deranged)

RED DONS – "Fake Means Failure" LP (Deranged/Taken By Surprise)
It seems wrong for me to include a band that I am now a member of in with my top ten. The truth is that I had no idea I would be playing with them when I first heard this record. It would be a lie if I didn't include it. What can I say? This record marks a return to form from the musicians that were responsible for the OBSERVERS brilliant output in the aughts. That being said, they don't rely on cookie cutter structures and manage to really step up with a similar yet very different style than the aforementioned band. This record is worth your attention and has been on my record player more than any other this year, and that doesn't count learning the songs. I really wish I had played on it.

HERÄTYS – LP (Not Enough)
This record made my last years top ten records which was too late to be run. Anyway somehow it was not covered in MRR until 2010 rolled around so I will try to reiterate that anyone who likes hardcore, especially of the Swedish inclination, needs to get their hands on this slab of vinyl as soon as they can before it's too late. This band has lots of plans coming up, and people should be getting hip to them in the States in 2011 I imagine since it is rumored they will release their next LP on Prank Records. Hardcore perfection.

MASSHYSTERI – LP (Ny Vag/Feral Ward)
This may be slower than their first LP, but no one can argue that the layers and harmonies they have added on this, their sophomore effort, really aren't some of the most catchy songs produced on the garage side of punk this year. The vocals are perfect and the leads are unique and interesting.

COMPLICATIONS – LP (Feral Ward)
I used to think COMPLICATIONS were just BORN DEAD ICONS lite, but after listening to this record quite a few times I really dig it. It has ultra catchy hooks and the vocals, although at first seemed a bit whiney, somehow have become infectious. These guys have been playing for a lot of years together and it really shows.

KNUSTE RUTER – "Gjennom Veggene" LP (Sjakk Matt Plater)
Anyone who is a fan of Norwegian hardcore like STENGE DORER or SO MUCH HATE should take note because this record is the embodiment of the '80s and '90s hardcore sound of the region. Although the band has firm influences in Vikingcore, this record has a lot of originality and definitely stands up on its own merit. The guitar is played with precision as well as the punk grit and raw cut that you would expect. An all around great record.

DOUBLE NEGATIVE – "Daydream Nation" LP (Sorry State)
This is just a really great hardcore record. It incorporates lots of different styles but never really sounds like any other band and for that I applaud them.

EL BANDA – "Skutki Uboczne" 2XLP
Continuing in the tradition of POST REGIMENT, EL BANDA carries the torch of the members' previous band and manages to really step it up with well played complex music in a way that most bands can't even come close. This record is just legendary. I had overlooked this in my first cut for top tens but now listening to it I can't believe I did. It is incredible that a band can release this much material of quality in such a short period. Seriously if you haven't heard this band I highly recommend at least giving them a listen. (Pasazer)

Honorable mentions:
CAT PARTY – LP, FIX MY HEAD/KNIFE IN THE LEG – split LP, INEPSY/TOXIC HOLOKAUST – split LP, HERATYS –"Helvettiin ja Takaisin" EP, ARCTIC FLOWERS/SPECTRES – split EP, MALE NURSES – "Religious Hypnotist" EP, BLOODY GEARS-"End of the Line" EP, GESTAPO KHAZI-"Escalators/The Atomic Kind", HJERTESTOP – "Musik For Dekadente Ører" EP, LOS MONJO – "Mexicanos al Grito de Mierda" EP, NO ESCAPE – "Generation Trap" EP, FRESH AND ONLYS – "August In My Mind" 12", MARVELOUS DARLINGS – "Teenage Targets" EP
Live:
DOOM TOWN, WEIRD WOUNDS, DAYLIGHT ROBBERY, BLANK DOGS, HERATYS, HARDA TIDER, RAW MEAT, NIGHT FEVER, TERRIBLE FEELINGS, FLEIHENDE STURME.

BRANDON FERRELL B/W LAUREN FERRELL

Top 10 LPs of 2010:
VAASKA – "Ruido Hasta La Muerte" LP (540/ Todo Destruido)
I was anticipating this second 12" so much that I had to ask one of the band members to at least let me get a sneak peek at it before it was even done being mixed/mastered. I practically begged him, but it didn't take much begging and it was well worth it. Lauren and I were fucking floored at how they had nailed what they were going for all along. The recording this time around (same dude I recently found out that did both albums) is absolutely perfect. Hans Zimmerman (recording dude/musician in good bands) definitely hit a home run recording this. This, from the first time I heard it I knew it was going to be my favorite record of the year, it was a no brainer. As I told the band and engineer, it sounds like MG15 recorded at BGK's Studio. It's just perfect hardcore punk that has something for everyone, not just d-beat lovers. That's what makes it stand out.

SYSTEMATIC DEATH – "Systema Six" LP (Feral Ward)
When I heard the old Japanese boys were back in town to throw it down, I expected it was be pretty good. What I got when I heard the LP was something *far beyond that*. This LP is a major-rager all the way through, non fucking stop. It's faster than their old material, harder than their old material, and just all around better than their old material. I *love* old SYSTEMATIC DEATH too, so it's a bold statement I know. This LP just crushes, the drums really capture me and everything else is right on target as well. A good friend of mine and I were talking about how only bands like this can pull off full on pop punk riffs and make them into completely bad ass HC tunes. It's so weird, you'll hear what I mean next time you listen. Last song on Side A is definitely a hardcore fucking pumper.

NERVESKADE – LP (Black Water)
Fucking destructive hardcore thrash. To me this shit sounds like CONFUSE and ZYKLOME A's fucked up conjoined twin baby. I also love this bands retarded little kid drawing artwork (although well done, this is not a diss at the artist by any means), it fits their style so well. I liked their first 7" a good amount, but they nailed it with this one, the recording, song structures and variations. The slower songs like "Parasites" are just perfect. This band's getting some hype built around them, and well deserved. Nice people that play not so nice music. Pick up a copy if you see it!

HERÄTYS – LP (Not Enough)
Steamroller fucking Swedish d-beat with Finnish (language not style) vocals. I could hear a slight Finnish influence, but for the most part this *no bullshit* d-beat hardcore fucking *punk*! TOTALITÄR would be a good comparison for these guys. They have riff after riff after riff that just bash your fucking head in one after the other. Never gets old either, I could listen to it on repeat for a few hours; I've done it. These guys need to get some more street hype (too bad they aren't mysterious enough) and fucking get over to the states. HERÄTYS—if you're reading this—I will book you a US tour and put out your 7" or a new one or new LP in the US. HERÄTYS RULES!
ANXIETY – "Pathetic" LP (Social Napalm)
One man solo project (written on the spot while recording, which I don't believe at all!) from Ban of BOSTON STRANGLER, SCAPEGOAT and who knows what else. This shit *rips*! Total thrashed out hardcore punk like RUPTURE, or ELECTRO HIPPIES Faster stuff. Recorded on a four track

I think, but definitely sounds like a lot better quality than a 4 track, I'll tell ya that much! Even got a HEADCLEANERS cover on here to show some influence. Awesome stuff here, definitely can't wait to see what good ol strange little BAN comes up with next. What a good musician. Fuckin' Freak.

KRIEGSHÖG – LP (La Vida es un Mus / H:G Fact)
$30.00 for a new LP?? *What*????? Fuck that!!!!! Ah, yeah that was the word when it came out but everyone who said that *still bought one* and you know what? I don't think anyone regretted shelling out that $30 when they put this beast of an LP on their turntable. Distorted. Demented. Demolishing Japanese hardcore that could be considered d-beat or crust to some. Gatefold tip on sleeve, 180 or 210g vinyl, and 100% *full on rage* is what you could have gotten for $30 when this came out. Oh, too bad it's sold out. You should have sucked it up and bought the fuckin' thing when it was out instead of whining about the price. Shit had to be licensed from a Japanese label, I'm sure the recording wasn't cheap either, and all that packaging. Youth Attack records don't even look as good as these and no one has a problem spending millions on those records. The only one small problem I have with this LP is the intro—I always have to skip it—too long and not enough to keep my attention. Sorry KRIEIGSHÖG. Everything on the rest of the album is pure hardcore punk perfection.

KVOTERINGEN – "Samhällets Förrädare" LP (Feral Ward)
Never heard this band at all before this LP, and damn we were impressed. Lauren likes it more than I do, but I love it all the same and listen to it once every week probably. I liked the cover art (Yannick probably made it for the band because he didn't like theirs, ha ha, and wouldn't have it any other way, gotta love the guy). This came out with a slew of records that were all good (VARAUS, SYSTEMATIC DEATH, KIELTOLAKI, COMPLICATIONS) and this one definitely took me by surprise with it's power. Very powerful recording that sounds like the Incredible Hulk is playing drums while the rest of the band recorded on top of a mountain. Killer Swedish D-beat with members of MILLENCOLIN! Maybe soon we'll start seeing some KVOTERINGEN embroidered hats. That'd be chill, I'd rock a flex fit KVOTERINGEN hat. I need to hear their other records.

SUDOR/CRIMEN DE ESTADO – split LP (Solo Para Punks)
I had high hopes for this record as both did *great* 7"s prior to this. When I got it, I was a little let down. "*That's it*?" Then I played it on repeat one day and it just sunk in. The SUDOR side is definitely the greater of the two. They have a much more powerful recording (although still very raw) that gets the point across better. You can hear everything well and it strikes harder. The CRIMEN DE ESTADO side is still great but I think they could have chosen a better studio (or 4 track for that matter) but that's just me. Great songs and done well and raw like WRETCHED or early ANTI-DOGMATIKS... but their EP was produced so much better. I love the band and can't wait for their next onslaught. Same goes for SUDOR. Spain rules, fuckers.

STATE POISON – LP (Flowers of Carnage)
Their debut 7" was great so I figured this would be just as good. It's actually *not* as good as the 7", but still good enough to make my top ten because I really like this band. They come from France, where not many good bands have come from. Except for a select few in the '80s and these guys side-project bands now and LEXOMYL, the guy who recorded STATE POISON's first 7" and maybe this, not sure. Good dude. OK. Being ADD sucks. This LP is awesome. Little bit cleaner production than the 7", but still great straightforward Japanese style HC like OUTO, some GAUZE influence for sure, CONFUSE and shit like that. It's awesome! The artwork could look a little more old school, but whatever it ain't my band. It's a great LP and buy it if you like Japanese hardcore and you see it!

INEPSY – "Madness and Overkill" LP (Feral Ward)
What a breath of fresh air this was. This LP isn't the last on my list for any reason. There's no real rhyme or reason with this top ten except for the VAASKA LP is definitely #1. This LP is six songs of perfection! It's like a combination of *all* of their previous records, making for one hell of an album, or mini-album. Great artwork by Chani, too. Great recording, which their third LP lacked, at least that's what I thought. INEPSY is a great band for punks, rockers, metalheads, everyone. The End.

Honorable Mentions (If only it were a top 20!):
INEPSY – "Madness and Overkill" Pic Disc LP. *Whoops* this should really be in my top ten. Fuck. LAPINPOLTHAJAT LP (No Way is repressing this for US distribution, great Finnish punk/HC like LAMA/APPENDIX, seriously), KYLMA SOTA LP,KIELTOLAKI LP, so many more!!!! AHHHHH!!! FERAL WARD FAN CLUB OVER HERE.

Top Ten LP Reissues:
CHRONIC SICK – LP (NO WAY, shameless), VARAUS – LP (Feral Ward), FRATRICIDE – LP, SONS OF ISHMAEL – LP (Schizophrenic), CIA – LP (More Than A Witness), CRASH BOX – LP (Gonna Puke), WILLFUL NEGLECT – LP (HAVOC), DISARM – 2xLP (D Beat Raw Punk), NEW HOPE COMP – LP (Smog Veil), PATRIOTS – LP (Punk Records)

TOP 10 EPs OF 2010
LOW THREAT PROFILE – "Kick My Heart" EP (Deep Six Records)
I was kinda late to the game on this record. I heard this band on one of the *Reality*? comps but didn't pay attention *whatsoever*. I didn't pay attention to anything hardly back then. Anyways. I heard about this NO COMMENT reunion band with Bob/Deep 6 on drums and was like "damn, might have to check that out?" We pop it on and it's like "Whoa, this sounds like WASTED TIME!!!" I didn't say it but I believed it. Check it out next time, first song. Anyhow it ain't about that. It's about this amazing record. Killer hardcore punk thrash powerviolence, they pretty much got something for everyone so don't waste any time and buy this record before you can't anymore!

ILEGAL – "Error De Orden" EP (Lengua Armada)
This is the definition of a perfect HC band. Blend parts WRETCHED, PANDEMONIUM, CONFUSE and record it raw and make a perfect sounding record after a perfect sounding demo. I hate you ILEGAL, for being too good. I'm glad I never got to see you and you're playing your last show or already have by the time this is out. Fuck you!

MUCH WORSE – "Proper Execute" EP (Pass Judgement)
I saw this EP on the Sorry State website with a comparison that said "GAUZE Meets JERRY'S KIDS" and was like, "Daniel. What in the fuck are you talking about—drink some more coffee, or something" but then I listened. and those were the only two fucking bands it reminded me of too. This EP is great except for the fact that it sounds like *dogshit* on vinyl. Don't put twelve minutes of music on a 7". I'm doing a 7" for them now, and it's 45rpm and still around eleven minutes. Definitely is it a lot cleaner and sounds a lot better/louder than the pressings of *Proper Execute*. It still makes my top ten because if you've heard the mastered MP3s you know this thing had major potential to sound *amazing*. Every song rips you a new one. The first US band I've heard rip off a few GAUZE riffs and do it well! *Rippers!*

KNIFE FIGHT – "Isolated" EP (Painkiller)
The CAHC fuckers are back to kill. Seriously. They're "Out For Blood" With their YDI-ish breakdowns that catch you off guard before their full on assault of *killer* POISON IDEA sounding hardcore. Kinda reminds us of the POISON IDEA *War All The Time* Mixed with KRAKDOWN and YDI. It's a killer 7", with a killer fold out poster. Hopefully their next LP does better than the last. This thing kills!!! The new drummer kid is *awesome*! He always is in all his bands!

SYSTEMATIC DEATH – "Systema 7" EP (Armageddon)
Along with their last LP *Systema 6*... SYSTEMATIC DEATH ain't fucking around. On this EP we have 4 even FASTER songs then their last LP. Straight up perfect Japanese HC punk with a slight thrash tinge. Perfect recording too, sounds just like all the old Selfish label records. Will buy everything these guys do, except weird splits.

GLAM – "Duelo de Titanes" EP (La Vida es un Mus)
It was nice to hear after INVASION and DESTINO FINAL weren't really doing much more that there was a band around in Barcelona hashing out some delay soaked vox over some distorted fast HC. This time around members of awesome bands like HORROR and UBER. Can't wait to never see these guys live. My white EP didn't come with an insert. Anyone? Six songs of killer thrash if you like INVASION or DESTINO FINAL, or punk at all.

VILE NATION – "Tight Leash" EP (Even Worse/Way Back When)
Just came out right before 2011, but it still qualifies! Four songs of fast as fuck chaotic thrashy HC punk like how URBAN WASTE or GANG GREEN did it. Wish there was a few more songs on here, but it's bare bones HC that is pissed and punishing so I can't really complain. Maybe these guys will play some shows and get LIFE TRAP back off their ass to play some shows too.

PERDITION – "Room 101" EP (Distort Reality)
Second EP from NYC's best band going. Anybody who has seen this band in the last year or so know these motherfuckers are doing it right. Raw, brutal, stomping hardcore punk that plows you, over and over and over. Their first EP had a little better production, which works good for them—but so does this rawer more nasty bass driven noisy one. Every song is great and well written and you can tell they're a band whose records you'll keep forever. If you've ever met them you know they are good people that deserve more credit for crushing people's fucking skulls, every fucking show. The people in this band are honest, passionate, genuine HC punk motherfuckers—support 'em!

SSR – "Orwellian Future" EP (Desolate Legacy)
These guys are my buddies, or were my buddies (the band's done already) and I can't believe this EP didn't turn more heads. They nailed a style most jerk offs try all the time and can never come close! Remember that US band HERESY, not the UK one? That's what SSR reminds us of. They kill, and they have a fuckin' flanger on the bass. Five songs on this EP. Very well recorded (not over produced or anything) just straight to tape and has so much good tone to it. Think it was mastered by Jack Control too, which can always turn a baby into a beast.

LA VOZ – "Deprimido" EP (Lengua Armada)
It's weird when a record strikes you as terrible and you never want to listen to it again when you first get it and look at it. A month down the line, you listen to it again and you *fucking love it* and it *grows* on you more and more *all the time*!!!! The crappy layout and its "modern-ness" killed it for me the first time. But then I didn't care much about the layout anymore and the songs are just fucking *brutal* thrashed out LA HC punk but with a sound that brings to mind RATOS DE PORAO, DECLINO, and of all bands LIFE'S HALT—*which is not a bad thing*!!!!!! Check this record out!

Honorable Mentions (If only it were top 20!):
UX VILEHEADS – "Catch 22" EP (Sorry State), TALK IS POISON – "Rage To Infinity" EP (Self Released), FOGNA – EP (Bad Shit), BATTLE RUINS – EP (Rock N Roll Disgrace), MALE NURSES – EP (Deranged) BLOODY GEARS – EP (Deranged) NEGATIVE LIFESTYLE – EP (Bad Shit)
Top 10 EP Reissues of 2010:
CHRONIC SICK – EP (NO WAY, best label, backed hard), MODERN WARFARE – EP (Aussie Label, don't know the name. Wes From Insurgents label), NONCENS – EP (SMRT), MALINHEADS – EP (Thought Crime), REACTORS – "I Want Sex" EP (Last Laugh), FINGERS "Isolation" EP (Last Laugh), ANTIDOTE "Thou Shalt Not Kill" EP (Bridge 9), AGNOSTIC FRONT "United Blood" EP (if you use the inner-sleeve as the cover, ha—Bridge 9) X (Australian) EP (540), All ELECTRIC DEADS EPs (Noise and Distortion)
Tapes we liked this year:
BOSTON STRANGLER, CRIATURAS, UNHOLY THOUGHTS, LOST TRIBE, PLAGUE, BORN BAD, BUNCH MORE....

LAYLA GIBBON

45/EP
LAS SEÑORAS – "Digitacion" EP (Sola Para Punks)
When I got this record I had no idea it included members of another favorite Spanish punk band, SILLA ELECTRICA, I just freaked out on the full on brat attack perfection. Combining the snotty attack of early classic South Bay surfer HC with the venomous electrix of something like the LOST SOUNDS, but it's shouty bratgirl style, the snotty inheritors of VULPESS. So much energy and excitement, I hope they release fifty more 45s instantly. This is probably my most listened to 7" of the year...

VERONICA FALLS – "Beachy Head/Staying Here" (Captured Tracks)
"Beachy Head" is a perfect song. This band's slower songs are hit or miss but their Medway styled doomed garage take on VU are direct kickstarts to my heart. I have a feeling this band is not really that influenced by the C86 scene, despite the fact they've been lumped in with the revival... This is not twee or sweet or coy, it's not gentle shambolic indie... VERONICA FALLS sing about love in a dark and eerie manner, evoking suicide spots and graveyards without being a crappy horrorcore joke. This record reminds me of sitting in my teenage bedroom listening to the DELMONAS 5 LP. As that band did they take the garage-ier, spikier aspects of the VELVET UNDERGROUND and those NUGGETS comps, and add their own personality and style. Both 45s have been total perfection, and despite the fact they are on a prominent US indie label, really difficult to get outside of the eBay machine now, but it's worth the effort I promise.

NEON BLUD – "Whipps" (Fan Death)
As soon as we got this record at the compound, all ladies present mailordered it. Instantly. Chaotic, spiteful destructive and deconstructionist hardcore with anti-social tendencies. Like getting passed a note in a secret language that you want in on, this is malicious. Samantha's vocals are a threat, the music backs her up. Can't wait for the LP!

TUBERCULOSIS – "Disfrasandose" EP (Lengua Armada)
Raging politically charged hardcore from one of the most exciting scenes in the US for the past two years... Taking influences from early European hardcore and re-contextualizing it so it makes sense in South Central LA, this band continually blow me away live and their demo and 7" are constant stereo selections. Intelligent but totally fuck you music, this is punk rock, the energy, the power and the ability to make you wanna shift your ways of thinking as well as improve your slam dancing skills. Every band should be a movement.

CRAZY SPIRIT – "Burning Churches" EP (Toxic State)
Darby Crash on a CCM blitz, RUDIMENTARY PENI on bad speed. This is the best and most necessary.

LIBYANS – "Paralyzed/Keep Waiting" EP (Sorry State)
Picking between the LP and this record was difficult, but ultimately the song "Paralyzed" in one of the most anthemic powerful punk songs I heard this year. Shades of AVENGERS for sure, but through a Boston HC lens. Essential...

GLAM – "Duelo de Titanes" EP (La Vida es un Mus)
Music that is falling apart and will take you down with it, built from a 50th generation dubbed tape of DELERIUM TREMENS, desperation, venom, disgust, the furious sounds of the Spanish underground...

INSERVIBLES – "Triguena" EP (Shogun)
Mexican garage punk destruction, battered down to its final brutal conclusion. These are demos recorded in 2008 but they could have been recorded any time from 1976-now and still resonated. Makes you wanna snort some Drano.

SUPER WILD HORSES – "Enigma (You Say Go/World's Gone Bad" (Hozac)
I was really excited to see these Aussie ladies play when they toured the US this summer, and of course for the LP. SUPER WILD HORSES is primal rudimentary garage spit reminiscent of the FRUMPIES at their most antagonistic and stripped down. The LP is great, but has too many dreamy songs on it when what I like from this band is the stark otherworldly attack provided by the song "Enigma." Like the soundtrack to an imaginary movie about a cult of teenage girls.

HOMOSTUPIDS – "Night Deacon" (Fashionable Idiots)
The latest from one of my all-time favorite bands. I think I have put one of their records on my list every year since I started top tenning for the magazine, and this year is no exception. They are the best, most confusing compulsive music. Punk.

Honorable mentions:
ICEAGE – "Hole" EP (Escho), PROYECTO HOMBRE – "Cuerpos" EP, VACCINE – "Human Hatred" EP, NOMOS – "Most Dangerous Game" EP TIMMY'S ORGANISM – "I'm a Nice Guy Now/Cold Pizza", BURNING YELLOWS – "Urinal Cakes/Drought", MANIPULATION – "Violence" EP, VILE GASH – "Life Rot" EP

Long Players:
DAYLIGHT ROBBERY – "Through the Confusion" LP (Residue)
I totally slept on this band until Mariam got here, at the beginning of last year, missed both of their 7"s when they actually came out. But then when *this* came out... We pretty much constantly listened to this LP throughout the year, in every situation of stress or raucous good times or up all night working on the magazine. It's so good, the desperate male/female vocals and music that brings to mind the best parts of X and the WIPERS. Intelligent, searching lyrics too. I fucking love this band, and this record, it's a defining sound that will forever remind me of this year.

RATAS DEL VATICANO – "Tiempos de Austeridad" LP (Captcha)
So good! When they played here that had this tense, nervous stage presence that fell somewhere between implied violence and awkwardness, which is how the record is too. I liked their last LP, but this one-sided 12" is sordid, destructive and

compulsive malevolence that gets stuck in my head when my thought head a certain way.

TRASH KIT – LP (Upset the Rhythm)
This all girl multi-racial band sound like what I wanted RIP RIG AND PANIC to sound like after I heard that Neneh Cherry had played in a (post) punk band… Exuberant exciting music that unlike most of the stuff on my list this year sounds inclusive and joyful, a completely different idea of punk.

BLACK TIME – "More Songs About Motorcycles and Death" 12" (Wrench)
Man do I love this band. I hope they are on hiatus and not broken up. This 12" exemplifies everything that makes them great, tense evocative garage punkers that have shades of CUPID CAR CLUB, SUBWAY SECT, COMET GAIN… I find it hard to write about them as they are just so good, the way they create a world that brings to mind Kitchen Sink/Angry Young Men movies of England in the '60s, the tunes of Vic Goddard… it's tetchy genius and I love it.

PUFFY AREOLAS – "In the Army 1981" LP (Siltbreeze)
Awkward skuzzy psych-punk that is an out of body experience, endless genius sounds of Ohio.

TYVEK – "Nothing Fits" LP (In the Red)
So many possibilities created from seemingly basic resources that in the hands of most are squandered and devalued.

WETDOG – "Frauhaus" LP (Captured Tracks)
This record is a little too polished for me, but it's still pretty great. More post-KLEENEX ladypunk explorations from Londres!

WHITE BOSS – LP (Perennial)
Lake Fair at 3am. Grilled cheese at the Reef after that. This record is the paranoid yet oddly soothing new sound of Olympia. So simple yet there's so much to it, one of the most evocative, powerful records but it's so unassuming in it's power.

SON SKULL – "Birth Scene/Rewind" (Perennial)
More Olympia, this is hanging out with your friends, having a heated discussion, someone leaves the room in disgust but you'll know they'll be back tomorrow. Comfort/discomfort. A new sound that sounds eternal.

CRIMEN DE ESTADO / SUDOR – split LP (Mal Sonido)
The future. The past. The present. The end of time.

Honorable Mentions:
DOUBLE NEGATIVE, NUCLEAR FAMILY
Tapes!
WEIRD TV, UV RACE, FIREBRAND, SCEPTRES, HYSTERICS, NEONATES, NEON PISS, OPT OUT, POLLUTION.

MARIAM BASTANI

I would have to agree with others, 2010 was the worst year of my life. At least it was a good year for Punk. Here's my top ten in no particular order. Sorry for the lack of description, but there is no room left, as this is the longest top ten in MRR *history.*

V/A "Brutales Matanzas" – LP (Cintas Pepe)
Best comp I have heard in a long time. This LP features bands from Peru and Mexico. Makes my brown pride even stronger.

NERVESKADE – LP (Black Water)
Loud noisy chaos, with anguished brutal screaming vocals and fast as hell. Love it.

SUDOR / CRIMEN DE ESTADO split –LP (Mal Sonido)
Watch out! It's a Barcelona and Madrid Spanish D-beat tag team attack. Both bands are raw and stripped down but each had their own leanings with CRIMEN DE ESTADO keeping it south with some Italian influence and SUDOR going north with some Scani flavor.

WHITE BOSS – LP (Perennial)
Hardcore for meditation.

KYLMÄ SOTA – "10 Tracks" LP (Feral Ward)
This record is raw, fast hardcore that sounds like KAAOS and DISCLOSE crunched together.

KRIEGSHOG – LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
This is probably in everyone's Top Ten. So what can I say except that it's one of the best Japanese Hardcore record this year, except for Crow "vertigo/Occupied Japan" 45. This thing is a beast.

DAVILA 666 – "Oooh" 12" (Rob's House)
Poppy-est and garagy-est record I have ever liked and the only good memories of the worst relationship I ever had.

FIRMEZA 10 – "El Grito de la Tierra" LP (Disco Autoproducido)
Stripped down, brutal hardcore that has more heart than most bands that exist right now. I love this record and admire this band.

V/A–"Nagoya City Hardcore" LP (Prank)
Tons of killer Japanese tracks spawned by equally killer bands from Nagoya.

HERÅTYS – LP (Not Enough)
Old school sounding Swedish HC with all the rage and ferocity that made you fall in love with it in the first place.

7"
CROW – "Vertigo/Occupied Japan" 45 (Prank)

INSERVIBLES – "Triguena" EP (Captcha)
All of their releases this year kicked ass, but this was the first and is a vinyl release of their demo. It's pissed off hardcore with the some raw garage sound thrown in.

FOGNA – "Merda Come L'Oro" EP (Bat Shit)
It's sounds like if WRETCHED did the sound track to *Suspiria* in collaboration with GOBLIN. Dark, atmospheric and awesome.

ICE AGE – "Hole" EP (Escho)
Weird Punk.

KE SE MUERAN – Histeria Katracha EP (no information)
Punk from Honduras veiled in mystery and greatness.

PROYECTO HOMBRE – "Cuerpos" EP (self-released)

GLAM – Duelo de Titanes EP (La Vida Es Un Mus)

CRAZY SPIRIT – "Burning Churches" EP (Toxic State)

AKEMARROPA – "Esclavo De Lo Que Ves" EP (Contra Orden/Odio Los Discos/Rock Sub/Darbuka)
Awesome Peruvian hardcore.

RAYOS X – "Mi Desorden" EP (Lengua Armada)

Other stuff that kicked ass this year:
DAWN OF HUMANS – EP (Always Restrictions)
CONFINES – "Withdrawn" EP (Labor Of Love / Side Two)
LOS MONJO – "Mexicanos al Grito de Mierda" EP (Solo Para Punks)
SSR – "Orwellian Future" EP (Desolate Legacy)
OKKULTORATI – "Knarkskog EP (Lilla Himmel/Ormeyngel)
PERDITION – "Room 101" EP (Distort Reality)
EUNUCH – "Stillborn" EP (self-released)
LÖGNHALSMOTTAGNINGEN – "Lumpet Trick" EP (Local Cross)
TOTAL CONTROL – "Paranoid Video/Real Estate" EP (SmartGuy)
ILEGAL – "Error De Orden" EP (Lengua Armada)
MANIPULATION – "Violence" EP (Fashionable Idiots)

Live Top Ten:
No Statik ,Tuberculosis, PLF, Daylight Robbery, Mata Mata, Morpheme, Poliskitzo, Vaccuum, In Disgust, Necro Hippies

Demos:
OPT OUT, BELLICOSE MINDS (even though they never sent the tape I paid for), VERRATERISCH, CERVIX, WEIRD TV, SPEED KILLS, KROMOSOME, NEON PISS

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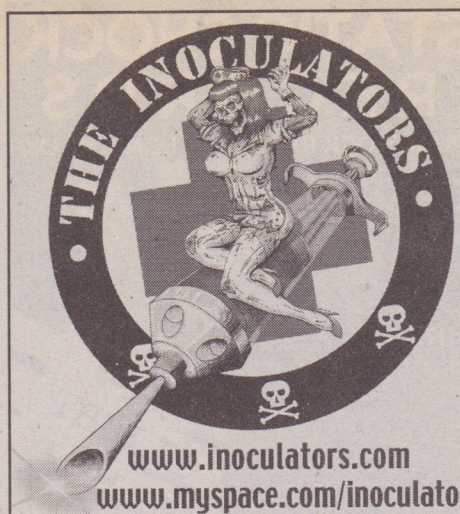

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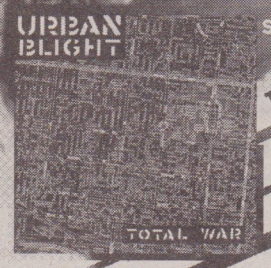

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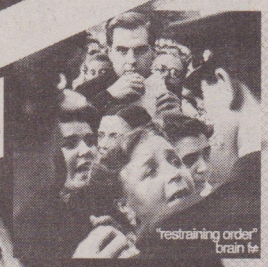

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USELESS CHILDREN

Useless Children came to SF from Australia in the summer of 2010, pledging allegiance to Venom P Stinger and Feedtime, questionable meat products and 'orrible living.
Interview by Layla Gibbon and Robert Collins.
But who says what?!

MRR: Everyone say your name and instrument, so I can identify your voice.
Rob: I'm Rob and I play guitar.
Cinta: I'm Cinta, I play drums and sing.
Steve: And I'm Steve and I play bass.

MRR: Welcome to San Francisco. The perfect place. So, you guys are from Melbourne?
Rob: Yes, we are.

MRR: Are you all from Melbourne? Because I kind of gather that Australians all live in one of the five cities at some point during their lives.
Cinta: I'm just from the country…
Rob: Yeah, I'm from Melbourne.
Steve: I've lived in Melbourne since I was six. So, yeah, we're pretty Melbourne.

MRR: So if I were to ask, Melbourne or Sydney, it's Melbourne?
Cinta: Yeah.
Rob: Yeah.
Steve: Definitely.

MRR: When you think of bands from Australia generally, and Melbourne specifically, you're basically dealing with Eddy Current and Pisschrist. I realize there's a way bigger scene…
Cinta: There's really good bands in Melbourne. There's fucking shitloads of really good bands, and there's a really healthy music scene. We play lots of gigs with this band called Teen Archer. They're fucking awesome. And they just make really like dirty punk rock.
Rob: They're pretty raucous. I think we deal with Pisschrist and Eddy Current on personal levels, but we played with Pisschrist a while back, and Eddy Current, they're fucking huge…

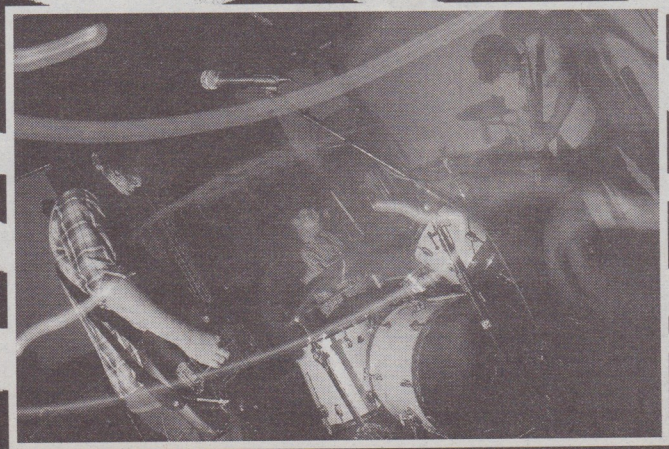
MRR: That's so weird to me.
Rob: Yeah, so it's like, you know on personal levels we're all friends, but…
Cinta: Eddy Current is ridiculously big and they don't play very much at all, you know?
Steve: Yeah.
Rob: Eddy Current headlined the Melbourne City Zoo for 3,500 people at twenty bucks a head.
Cinta, Steve: Forty bucks a head.
Cinta: If they actually decided to go with someone else other than Goner, they would be like the biggest thing in Australia. But they're not; they just like to do it themselves.

MRR: And just to clarify, you don't mean like the biggest punk thing in Australia.
Cinta: Like, the biggest thing in general.
Steve: Bigger than Jet. [laughter]
Cinta: Like Midnight Oil, the Midnight Oil of today.
Steve: They get talked about on the morning shows. Like, you know, the early morning mainstream television shows.
Cinta: But enough about Eddy Current.

MRR: Yeah. Anyway, talking about your band. If I were to just hear your records, then I would associate you with a lot of US noise rock, like Amphetamine Reptile… But actually live it seems way more rooted in noisy old Australian rock. Where do you guys place it? Are you drawing from both or are you drawing from one more than the other?
Rob: See, I find a lot of AmRep bands very frustrating. I feel like so many of the records were almost there, but they never quite made it, you know? AmRep did do a whole lot of Australian stuff. They released the last Feedtime record, and they did King's Snake Roost, and all this noisy Australian rock. I would say that, for me, what I listen to is rooted in noisy Australian rock. Venom P Stinger and Feedtime. They're the two biggest punk influences on me.

MRR: Yeah, Venom P Stinger is amazing.
Rob: Yeah, I fucking love them.

MRR: It's funny, because when I was younger I thought of the Australian punk scene as being just kind of Nick Cave-esque or something, because I was really into the Scientists. But more like that swampy stuff. It's taking that kind of like heavy dirge-y idea, but like taking out the kind of rockin' thing, you know? It's not as connected to the blues scale in the same way, you know?
Rob: I think the funny thing is that some of the bands, like Feedtime and X, I think that their whole thing was that they were just doing a rock 'n' roll band. They wanted to sound like Rose Tattoo or the Rolling Stones, you know? But, those people couldn't possibly do a band that sounded like Rolling Stones.
Cinta: Yeah, it's so fucked up.
Rob: So it comes out sounding like some music…people compare it to something like the Butthole Surfers, but it's just way more fucking retarded and messed up than anything the Butthole Surfers could possibly do. But in their head they're like, "This is rock 'n' roll," you know? The Birthday Party had such a very huge influence on all Australian music, I think, particularly on a band like Venom P Stinger. They sort of like sprouted from that sort of scene. They would have been the kids around



that sort of scene. A fair bit of the violence and sort of aggression from the Birthday Party is translated to some bands, and then the aesthetic and the look translated to others.

MRR: True or false, Nick Cave's kid still hangs out on Melbourne?
Rob: Yeah he still hangs out—his mum lives in Collingwood.
Steve: He's a model.
Rob: I used to hang out with him a lot when I was younger, and he was just like this little wiener kid. He used to say that Nick Cave was his dad, and I was like, "Shut the fuck up, Nick Cave is not your dad. You're all right, but Nick Cave is not your dad." And then one night we were at this party and we got really wasted, and then we got chased away... He ended up tagging along with us and we ended up sleeping at his house. And, um, you know I woke up in the morning and I looked around and there's photos of Nick Cave around the house and I was like, "No shit, Nick Cave is your dad. That's fucking retarded."

MRR: It's cool that he's like a punk or whatever. Weird that he's a model...
Rob: I think he's just fucked. I haven't seen him in a little while because he's been off in Paris or whatever... But every time I see him he'd come and sit next to me on the couch and I'd be like, "Hey Jethro what's up?" and he'd look, "Man I just took so much *aciiiid*." And just fucking lose it. Then there was this show that got really raucous, and Jethro thought he'd really freak some people out, and he looked at this girl and then smashed a glass on his face. He was oozing with blood, and then he stood there and he was like, "What'd I just do?" [laughter]
Rob: And then got rushed to hospital. [laughter]

MRR: So, uh, this is your first US tour, discuss.
Rob: It's been up and down.
Cinta: Yeah.
Rob: It's been good, mostly good.

MRR: Where was the first show?
Cinta: It was in Pennsylvania, in Philly. And it kinda sucked.
Steve: Yeah, it was probably the worst show of the tour.
Cinta: It wasn't promoted really well at all. But it was with Lamps, and they're really cool. But there was just no one there, and it was a horrible sounding concrete room. It was just really bad.

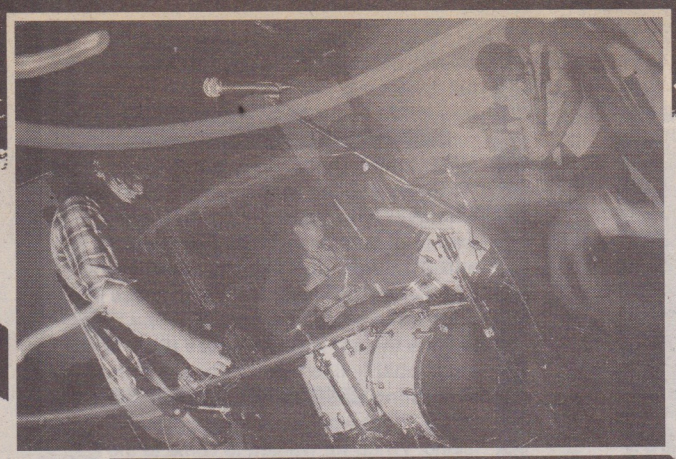
MRR: Without mentioning names, would you like to talk about your first driver?
Cinta: I don't know. Our driver got fucking hammered and drove into a parked car, damaged like three side panels, took off the mirror, and then just kept driving. That was the first day we met him.
Rob: It was two doors up from our friend's house, where we were staying, and we were standing there, watching him do it.
Cinta: He crashes into this car, and then the next day we were like, "Look dude, you crashed into a car." And he was like, "What, did I really?"
Cinta: He was hammered, and he spent the whole night looking for coke. [laughter]
Steve: Yeah, that was an interesting start. Basically, we'd come a really long way and put a lot of time and effort into it and we didn't want someone like that to fuck it up for us. We basically decided that we'd rather, if it came to it, blow off a part of the tour whilst we organize ourselves. In the end our friends were able to call in a lot of favors on our behalf and did an incredible job of pulling together for us, so two days later we were on the road.
Rob: With a sane driver.
Steve: With a sane, normal driver who didn't crash into anything. It was great. And then our second show in Philly was in a basement and...
Cinta: It was awesome.
Steve: That's probably still one of my favourite shows of the whole tour. At that time we still didn't know if we had a driver or what was going to happen, and so it was kind of just like, "Fuck it, we might not have another show, so we might as well give it..."
Cinta: It was just packed and people couldn't even stand up properly because the ceiling was so low.
Rob: Yeah, I was smashing my head on the ceiling every time I threw my head back.

MRR: Who did you play with?
Rob: That was with the band, Pink Coffins, which is Jordan from Yo Man Go...

MRR: And Dennis from Stations and Fighting Dogs
Cinta: They're good. I liked playing at the DNA Test Fest in Baltimore. That was pretty fun. There were so many bands playing and everyone was kind of really stressed. There was so much gear because every band had a full backline—it took up a whole half of the room we played in. Anyway, it was really hard for us to find gear to use. And then all of the sudden the band that was before us, they realized that they didn't have a bass and their bassist was left handed, so they wanted to swap with us and everyone was like, "You gotta get on now. You gotta get on!" It was really stressful and that just made us all like real angry, and then we played really well.
Steve: Yeah, I was outside and I came in, and then all my shit's on the stage and everyone's yelling, "Get on right now!" We played to a very full room and I was like, shit none of these people have ever seen us, and apparently they kind of liked it. So, yeah, that was really good.

MRR: So you've basically driven across the country.
Rob: We started in Philly, then went down to South Carolina, and all the way across to Texas, and then up to Minneapolis, and down through the Midwest back up to Rhode Island, and back down through New York to Philly. We've done a nice loop around. This is like the West Coast leg. We covered like a large part of the country, which is pretty cool.

MRR: What were your impressions of the Deep South?
Cinta: Yeah, it's really messed up.
Steve: I just felt generally uncomfortable.
Cinta: All the religious stuff is pretty raw, like "families that pray together stay together."
Steve: "Hell is real."
Rob: Through the Midwest there was this series of billboards all about guns, and I can't remember what any of them were, but anyway the last billboard would say "gunssavelives.com." And it was like, guns save lives? *Yeah.* [laughter]



Rob: It was really strange.
Steve: And dudes wearing t-shirts, "You can take my gun from my cold dead hands."

MRR: Karoline saw one when she was in Wisconsin last week that said, "Abortion: 40 million fewer people paying into Social Security." Really, you're pro-life only because you want people to pay your Social Security when you get old? That's it?
Rob: Dude, that's fucked up.
Cinta: The stuff about abortion is pretty full-on as well.
Steve: We ate some really good Mexican food though, that was the highlight of the South. And grits.
Rob: Had to try it.
Cinta: There's some pretty weird people. We stayed at this guy's house, and he was really nice, but, like, he was *nice*. We went to his house and he was like, "You can stay at my house. It's a good house, not like a punk hovel." We went to his house and it was like a huge middle class white boy house in some college suburb, but it was fucking filthy, really dirty. But anyway, we wake up the next morning and I was looking to find a bathroom. I thought, "OK, maybe I'll get away with getting a shower here," because I hadn't showered in a few days. I couldn't find it anywhere and I went in every room. There was this one room that had like a swipe card to get into, but it was left open and I went and was like, "This must be it." I pushed the door open and it was like this command station with all these computers. Every room in the whole fucking house had a video camera and it was all under surveillance. Yeah, it was pretty weird.
Rob: That was fucking messed up.

MRR: You didn't get the story, you just bailed, right?
Rob: Oh, we tried to bail, but then they were already up and when they saw us up they were like, "You guys smoke weed? You want to smoke weed? C'mon we'll smoke some weed!" We just wanted to get the fuck out of there.

MRR: Since you told me that, I got this mental picture of like somewhere in fucking Wichita there's a dude who pays twenty bucks a month to sit in front of his computer and watch this fucking scumbag, wasted all day, and on the house kitchen cam today they're probably smoking crack.
Rob: Yeah, it was pretty wild.
Cinta: And they wanted us to go down to drink in their basement bar. And I just read this book by Joseph Fritz, who locked his daughter in a dungeon for like 24 years. Every time I went down there I felt a little panic.
Rob: We went down to the basement bar and it was just a basement. They'd set up this bar and had a dartboard and the rest of the place was just fucking trashed. Oh my god, there was all this shit everywhere and they were just like chilling around the bar. Like had their arm on the bar going, "Yeah this is the bar. The basement bar." And we were like, "This is a bit fucking strange. Just gonna go back upstairs."
Steve: We had a lot of problems with people complaining we were too loud as well. We had like a string of shows with people making us turn our amps down.
Rob: We cleared a few rooms.
Cinta: We're too loud for garage rockers.

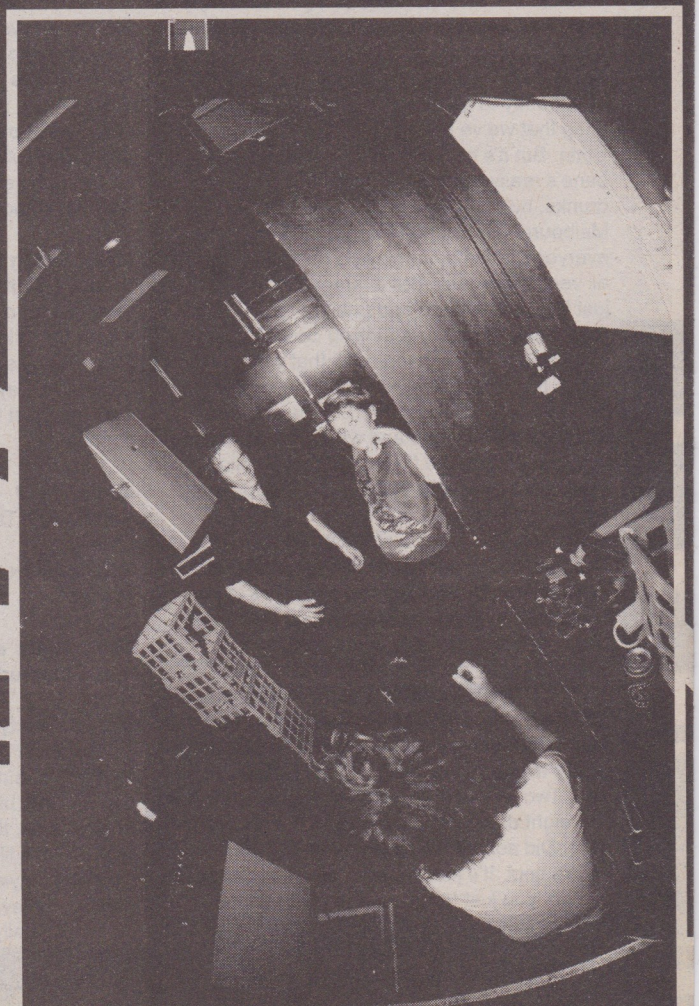
MRR: The Criminal IQ association, I think a lot of people see that label and think it's going to be garage rock even though that's certainly not all that comes out.
Cinta: We played this one show and it was all like garage rock bands and then there were people like kinda like swing dancing with like their shiny shoes on and stuff. The guitarist wanted to look like Buddy Holly. We played, and yeah, there were like three people in the room. It was a full room when we came on...
Steve: We play that loud because we use a lot of feedback and it has to be that loud to make it sound like that. We're not just doing it to be fucking annoying, but that's what a lot of people think. They don't get it. But a lot of our recent shows, people have just been standing there with their fingers in their ears thinking it's awesome.
Rob: It's happened a couple of times, like in Milwaukee as well. Instead of people leaving everyone just went to the toilet and got toilet paper to stick in their ears. It's pretty funny when you look up, and instead of the room being empty there's people just standing there with their fingers in their ears just going, "*Yeah*." It's really exciting.

MRR: Have you guys toured Australia?
Rob, Cinta: Yeah.

MRR: How is it? Because obviously Australia is not as big as America.
Rob: Well, it's as big.

MRR: Really?
Steve: It's as big, it's just spaced out.

MRR: There's a string of six cities on one coast and then there's a few surfing towns at the bottom and there's Perth.
Steve: It's the same size but we've got a tenth of the population, basically.
Rob: When we tour, we'll do like Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide. So there's sort of four cities that we play...
Steve: If you want to get adventurous you can



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play like Canberra or Newcastle and Wollongong.
Rob: Yeah, they're good towns, but it's time and money to get there, it hasn't been something that we've been doing.
Cinta: But it's good when you do it. Brisbane's really fun to play. They're a bunch of drunks, but they really get into it. Everybody in Melbourne just stands there. I think because everyone in Melbourne's in a band and they're all very *important*... But everyone in Brisbane just like gets wasted and goes nuts.
Rob: Yeah, Brisbane's fucking cool. We played at this place in Brisbane once that was upstairs in this bar. The floor was like, I don't know, a bit of a bouncy floor, right? So, then you go downstairs and you stand where the bar is and you look up and the floor is sort of like dipping. We played this place twice and the floor was just sort of bouncing and bowed under the pressure of the people standing on top of it. The people like still just fucking go nuts, and like this real fat dude in real fat clothes is like fucking running around jumping up and down and shit. And when you knew how much the floor was sagging... It's pretty concerning.

MRR: To properly tour Australia you really only need like two weeks and you can hit pretty much everything, right?
Rob: Two weeks? I think when we did it we had eight days. We played eight cities in eight days. Did some fucking brutal drives. But Australia's cool. It's just so far to drive that when you do, you just try to make it worth your while.

MRR: You were saying that Melbourne people don't dance or whatever. San Francisco is pretty much like that. How has the audience dance-meter been on this tour?
Rob: There hasn't been any dancing.

MRR: But like, approximately.
Rob: All right, zero percent.

MRR: So in the ballpark, just kind of like, roughly?
Rob: Nobody danced at all. It was like playing at home… in the rehearsal studio.

MRR: I know you guys have talked about new records. Are you guys playing new stuff on this tour?
Cinta: We're playing a couple of new songs.
Rob: We're playing the songs off the 7" that just came out, one or two songs off the LP, and the rest of them are new. No one knows our old shit, so no one cares if we don't play it.

MRR: Going from the first CD to the LP then the 7" it seems like you're getting slower and noisier. Is the new stuff continuing in that slow and noisy direction?
Rob: I'd say so. I enjoy it.
Cinta: We played with a few pretty cool bands that were just like pretty slow and pretty fucking heavy.

MRR: Who?
Cinta: MLU. They're from Tampa and they're brilliant.
Rob: They were like—the air shook when they played.

MRR: That's a really active creative scene there, just judging from stuff that we get sent.
Rob: It's pretty rare that you see a band that you've never heard of before, never knew anything about, and all of the sudden you're playing on a bill with them and you're so blown away… Like, they were fucking insane.
Cinta: It was like their last tour as well.
Rob: We played a string of shows with Neon Blud, and they said that people seem to think there is a really healthy scene down in Florida, but it's actually just twenty people that all play in five bands.

MRR: I think that's every punk scene. When I was a kid in the early '90s or whatever, and I was getting into punk, I was really obsessed with like Olympia and DC punk, stuff like Unwound and Circus Lupus. I was like, "Man those guys have such an amazing scene." But it's the same thing where there are probably like twenty people doing everything.
Cinta: That's what we liked about Rhode Island. When we wanted to come to the US we were like, we should try and play with Landed, Made in Mexico, Snake Apartment… What were some of the other ones?
Rob: Six Finger Satellite
Cinta: …There was another one as well. And then we realized that they're all people from one pool of dudes that have been doing bands forever.

MRR: I think Snake Apartment all live in different parts of the country.
Rob: It was funny when we got to Cleveland as well because Dan Stewart, or DX as you call him here, wrote a ton about Cleveland hardcore in *Distort*. We stayed with Kevin from 9 Shocks Terror, and I was asking him about this band and that band and he was like, "That was like my fucking high school band. That was fucking shit." He was like, "Cleveland hardcore doesn't exist. It's me and fucking Steve and Tony. There's like three of us."

MRR: I know. But that's the thing of punk. Dan is a really good *mythologizer*. I mean you can even see it just from the zines that we get sent at *Maximum*. Every hardcore zine that we get sent looks like *Distort*.
Rob: He did it in Australia as well. He put out one zine, and then another like ten or twelve zines or whatever started popping up around Australia. Most of them covered the limited amount of bands we had in Australia, then some international stuff that *Distort* had covered a few issues back.

MRR: I'm psyched he's doing a fanzine, and he's kind of reinvigorated fanzine culture. Like the message board thing that's invaded punk is really depressing to me. It's just like gossipy and boring and people say the shittiest stuff…
Rob: Well, a lot of people have been directing it at us.
Cinta: Yeah, we get death threats. Because of the drunk driver.

MRR: That's crazy.
Steve: The thing about the people that are really active on those message boards: they don't go to shows.
Rob: So, this guy who left us a death threat or whatever. I clicked on his profile and looked at the latest post that he's done, and you can look at everything that he's posted. In eight hours he posted on thirty-seven topics. So our post was thirty-seven topics ago, eight hours later. It was like, "Dude, what are you doing?"

Cinta: We wrote a post directed to all of the people saying all of this shit on Terminal Boredom. We didn't say what happened, we were like, "If anyone's got a problem come and speak to us at the show." No one had the balls to come up and say anything.

MRR: Well if you spend eight hours posting on thirty-six topics how the fuck do you have time to go to a show, much less kill someone? [laughter]
Rob: One of the dudes who was a big shot on the Distort forum when it was around, he had a zine called *Cut Sick*. We called my old band Cut Sick as an unrelated, unintentional thing. He started threatening violence and all this shit in his zine and on the internet. Then when we toured with Straight Jacket, he came to our show in Brisbane. I'm like six feet tall or whatever, but this dude's like fucking seven feet tall. He's fucking enormous, right. He's a big dude with a shaved head and he just stood at the back looking all grumpy, and he didn't come and talk to me at all. I was like, you were gonna fucking kick my head in and you'll talk about it on the internet, but you won't come and just fucking confront me in person.

MRR: He just wants to be an ominous presence in your life.
Rob: You seriously are an intimidating figure. You have biceps the size of footballs, but you won't come and actually intimidate me when you've been writing all this shit about me.
Cinta: He drew a picture that was similar to that Screeching Weasel cover. He drew it of that guy so he's someone's dick.
Rob: Yeah, I drew this picture, and I wanted to put it as our tour 7" cover or whatever. But the guy that put it out was friends with him and he was like, "No, I'm not gonna do that." And then Dan did this collaboration zine and the dude made this like death threat against us, so then I contributed to the next collaboration zine with just a picture of me shitting in his mouth. [laughter]

MRR: So, what happens after tour?
Rob: We go home.

MRR: Yeah, but what are you doing?
Rob: What are we doing?

MRR: Like, other records. Are you coming back? Do you like it enough to come back?
Cinta: Yeah we're gonna come back next year. We're gonna record. Fan Death wants to put a 7" out, so we're nearly ready to do that.
Rob: I wouldn't mind doing another bigger release, maybe not an album, but a longer EP or something. Albums are pretty intimidating things.

MRR: Is your 12" sold out?
Cinta: There's some left. Not many. But I kind of prefer doing 7"s because you're more focused on the quality of those songs. When we did the album it was just like, all right, just get that done. But if any of those songs were on a 7" I don't think I'd be happy with any of them.

MRR: Are you happy with the album as a whole?
Cinta: I'm happy with the 7" that we did. I'm happy with the album, but I think it could be a lot better.

MRR: It's just like the pressure to make songs?
Rob: The pressure to get everything finished by the deadline you set. I feel like a lot of bands like to keep a good recorded output happening. You have to set goals and if you just sort of write songs until you've got enough for an album you could be writing those over two years or something, and it sort of loses its focus. Then a year later that record comes out, and it's taken like three years to put out one thing.
Cinta: Then you record it and you've still only probably got the same amount of money that you'd be putting into the 7" anyway, but you're stretching it out over the whole album. I did the vocals for that album in like thirty-five minutes while they were packing up the room. We had to be out by six o'clock, so they're like packing everything up and loading out while I was finishing the vocal takes. I did two songs, and I did them twice, like a second take of two of the songs. A little bit more time would probably help.
Steve: For the last 7" we did, which is three songs, we spent about as much time on that as we did recording the whole album.
Rob: We went into a real studio.
Steve: Yeah, a real studio. It was great.
Cinta: Yeah, they ran everything through a big muff. Like my drums…
Steve: Vocals…
Rob: Yeah, it was really cool. This guy Sloth that recorded us, we went in there and he said, "What do you want to sound like?" We said loud and noisy. And he said "Oh, you want I to sound 'orrible." I think he made it sound pretty 'orrible. He said in Tasmania when he was growing up in the early '90s, that was their word for awesome. But it was "man that's 'orrible." It's not with an "h" but with an "o."

MRR: Is there anything else you would like us to include?
Steve: That first driver, he was awesome!
Rob: We did this interview just before we left for a local music magazine, and the guy messed up our voices and quoted everything wrong. I haven't eaten meat for a couple of years, but he quoted me as saying, "I can't wait to get to Texas and eat a massive steak." It was really funny.
Cinta: What he meant was a massive double down.

MRR: What's that?
Cinta: It's like two pieces of chicken, like deep fried chicken, as the bread, so you've got bacon and cheese inside, and then the two bits of chicken on the outside.
Steve: I ate one. It was all right.
Cinta: He ate it; it was just dripping.
Rob: And when we got to New York, there was a vegan place and the special was a vegan double down.

Update: The Fan Death 7" will be coming out soon… It's pretty raw and noisy. After this interview we played SF, Portland, and Seattle, which all shaped up to be some of the best shows on the tour. We played with Walls and they shook the foundations both times. We will be touring with them here is Oz in February. After that we will be heading in to record album #2. It will be even more 'orrible than the last one. We will be back in the states in summer 2012.

KITCHEN'S FLOOR

Loneliness is a Dirty Mattress

Matt Kennedy is Kitchen's Floor. Though there have been past members and most likely others will step into his revolving door lineup, Kennedy is the catalyst for some of the best downer noisy pop from the Southern Hemisphere (that hasn't spawned from New Zealand). If you go to any cool gig in Brisbane you will most likely run into Kennedy. He's the dude setting up in the corner with the lights off, running his vocals and battered acoustic guitar through a pedal to a tiny, plastic amp, a wine bottle nearby. Since his self-released dictaphone cassette in 2007 to 2009's Loneliness is a Dirty Mattress, *Kennedy has amassed a growing following with honest and raw songs that deal with frustration, heartbreak, losing friends and losing brain cells—all the good stuff. He's got a new record out in 2011.*
Interview by Tim Scott

MRR: A lot of reviews (mine included) of Kitchen's Floor refer to the suffocating humidity of Brisbane, alcohol and despair. Is it true that you actually just sit around an air conditioned apartment, watching *Sunrise*, playing Wii and drinking iced coffee?
If I could actually afford air-conditioning, an antenna for my TV, a Wii and iced coffee, then yeah that would be true. Until then though, I'm sleeping as much as I can through that shit.

MRR: The lineup has evolved and changed since you started. Are you difficult to get along with?
Yeah I'm a horrible person. I go out of my way to stay away from people for that reason, just for their sake. But since I need people to play the drums and bass in the songs I write I have to try to work with other people. Mostly I've failed due to my difficult personality, but fuck it, whatever.

MRR: What is the current state of affairs down at Kitchen's Floor?
I kicked out my rhythm section and got a new one. A lot of people in Brisbane got angry at me for that but I got my reasons. Right now Kitchen's Floor is way overdue for a new album to follow up *Loneliness*, and the songs are ready so they'll be recorded soon. This year has been pretty shit for Kitchen's Floor when it should have been good. I fucked my back up late last year and ended up with a herniated disc, so the chronic pain from that has left me incapacitated and generally angry at everything which has affected my deluded musical ambitions. My retarded spine has improved over the last few months though, so I plan to make amends in 2011 with a new album, new lineup and the extensive touring that I wasn't able to do this year.

MRR: How did you fuck up your back? Did physical pain play into how you approached new songs, as opposed to the stock standard emotional pain?
I don't exactly know what happened. Around that time I was drumming in White Cop and getting wasted every day; things were pretty intense and I can't remember much. Most of the new songs reference it in some way. It's had a big impact on the past year of my life.

MRR: Unlike America, the Australian health care system is considered good, but seems to be getting worse. How does a musician with little money get by? Not to go into the whole Australian health care system but it may be interesting, particularity for American readers, to know what your situation was like.
Started off seeing free doctors. They were really lazy and kept telling me to take ibuprofen and it'll eventually go away. It took them months to properly find out it was sciatica, and then I ended up getting a bunch of steroid injections directly into my spine, which did nothing. I was put on a waiting list to see a specialist and it took about six months before I got an appointment. There's not a lot that can be done about what I've got, short of some pretty intense surgery. Just a shit load of meds and physio and the hope it will eventually repair itself.

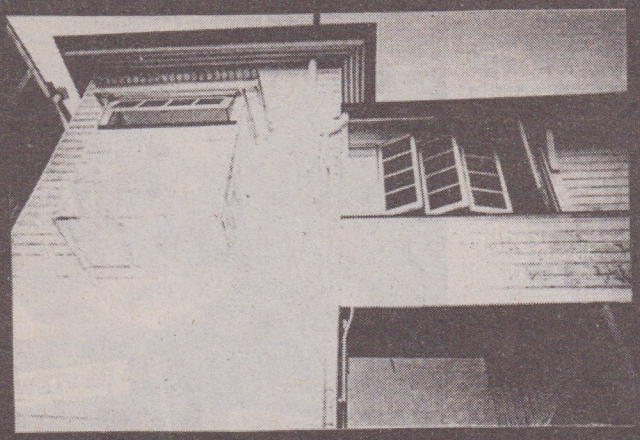
MRR: You seem quite active in the Brisbane scene. So I'm kinda confused. As you are part of Generation Y, I'm curious to what kind of plate it is that you expect everything to be handed to you on?
I have no idea. I feel completely alienated from the majority of people I meet. I understand it's 2010 and there's iPhones and XBOXs and shit, but I just kind of block it out. I think I was born at the wrong time.

MRR: I like the feel of "Still Night." Is there any meaning or story behind this?
That was a song I wrote one night while lying in bed with my guitar. It's probably the most literally direct song I've written lyrics wise, almost embarrassingly so if think about it too much. A few people have told me they don't like it and I'd say it's the least "popular" Kitchen's Floor song. When I sing "I'm just alone in this world" repeatedly in the chorus though, as corny as that sounds, it's honest.

MRR: You like to drink?
It passes the time.

MRR: How much?
Most days for the past few

KITCHEN'S FLOOR



years. It's horrible though. It's led me into bad debt and cost me a lot of friendships and time I could have spent doing something more productive. Getting drunk is still awesome fun though.

MRR: Do you think of song ideas while drunk?
Usually whatever is bothering me seems way more amplified in my mind when I'm drunk, which makes it easier to come up with songs. A lot of the time though I pass out, and when I wake up I have pages and pages of drunkenly scrawled lyrics littered around my room, and when I read them sober they are shit.

MRR: Bedroom Suck records.
Good label, run by some teenagers with good intentions who have moved into my house. I give them very biased yet quality advice regarding music and try to point in them in the right direction.

MRR: Like a punk Big Brother without the working with kids check?
I'm five years older than them but they're still way more mature than I am. They're freaking good at "business." I just hang out and make sure the label is being awesome.

MRR: Burst City. Is this a good place to play in Brisbane?
Yep, it's run by the old hardcore crusts of Brisbane. Honest, full of integrity. There ain't no government funding, money hungry venue managers or fucked security guards for this shit. Burst City is pure.

MRR: The name Kitchen's Floor alone draws certain connotations and images—even words. I'm thinking "sprawled" or "passed out on." Does it have some deeper metaphoric meaning or is it about linoleum?
I don't know...it's just a neat name to describe the sound of the band. Clunky, domestic, stupid, dirty.

MRR: The EP has a different sound to the LP. Was this a conscious choice?
After my last band Look!Pond broke up I had this idea to just play acoustic music forever, write minimal pop songs that way, and that was the early intention of Kitchen's Floor. The results of that can be heard on the EP, but I got restless for more distortion, I needed that heavy shit. Blankets of warm fuzzed out distorted glow in the music, so that's where I decided to take it for the LP.

MRR: It's funny you say that because while musically you sound different, that's the same approach I think Kevin was trying do with Pink Reason—broken down acoustic stuff with some more punk shit.
I am a massive Pink Reason fan. That music has gotten me through some horrible times in the last year. Thanks for the comparison.

MRR: The art from the seven inch looks like it's from a murder scene. What is the story behind that?
It's a photo I took of the back of my house. I've been living here for four years and I've always thought of it as an ominous structure. The house is falling apart though, as it's like 100 years old. I'll probably die when it collapses while I'm asleep.

MRR: Have you been surprised by some of the reviews from overseas? Most people seem to be digging the records. Do you think that has made more people here sit up and take notice?
A lot of the reviews I've read overseas seem to understand what Kitchen's Floor is about. That's what surprises me the most. I'm not sure if any of it has given Kitchen's Floor more credibility here. The shows we play are still pretty much the same. I like to think my band has some sense of worth though, and it's nice knowing some people are appreciating it.

MRR: I read on *Eternal Soundtrack* your review of a Chrome Dome show: "I wish more bands were like this instead of living their art only on the weekends in-between uni assignments like some lame arse indie rock band." Punks be 24-7?
Damn straight. Why bother with bands that are anything less than that? They're not going to change your life through music as they're not changing theirs.

MRR: I laughed when I heard someone at a Canberra gig yelled, "You're not cute. Get over it!" I guess in Melbourne and Sydney people take it for granted that more challenging music is supported, but go to places like Canberra or Newcastle (with the exception of Vox Cyclops), and music that doesn't sound like something that is played on triple j is derided. Having said that, there can be a certain smugness in Melbourne and Sydney (particularly Melbourne) that can be fucking annoying. Do you enjoy playing here?
Melbourne is alright yet generally more restrained than the smaller cities. People seem to be more self-conscious and are generally not as excited to see bands from interstate, as Melbourne is "the place to be." Yeah, Melbourne definitely has some awesome bands, but so does every other city. I like playing Melbs, although the last couple of times I've played there I've noticed a lot of people sit down while the bands play. That's lame. Get the fuck up.

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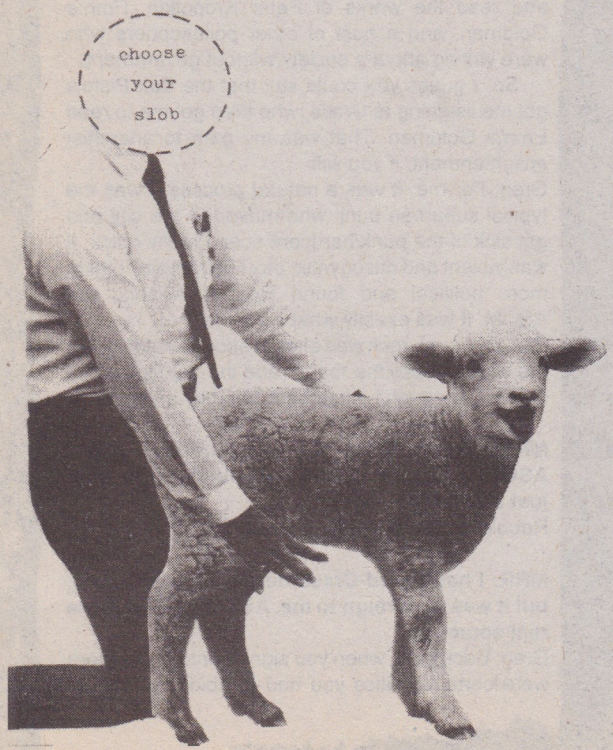
I first came into contact with A State of Mind back in 1984 from an advertisement in Maximum Rocknroll. *The election between Reagan and Mondale was looming and they advertised a flexi disc that they were selling for a dollar, postage paid. Soon after sending my dollar, I received a large package, stuffed with all kinds of information and posters. Almost every punk rocker that I know has a band that they can point to and say, "this is the band that changed my life," and A State of Mind is that band for me. They are also one of the more overlooked bands from the Bay Area, despite releasing many records with their label, Mind Matter. Recently, I was able to get back in touch with Rob and the rest of the band. Filled with questions that I've had for over 20 years, I sat down with them for three hours, listening to them catch up with each other while generously giving me their time.*
Interview by Steve Hart.

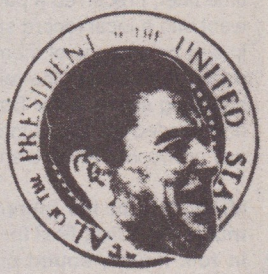
A STATE OF MIND

MRR: Hello. Can you introduce yourselves?
Robbie: Vocals and bass.
Kevin: Vocals, tape machine, and synthesizer.
Rip: Guitar and vocals.
Greg: Guitar, bass, drums, and vocals.
Chris: Guitar and vocals.
Robbie: We'd also like to mention other ASOM members that couldn't join us tonight: Allison (vocals), Mark K (bass), Juliet (vocals), MKultra (bass), Lord Jim…may he rest in peace (acoustic guitar), Greg S. (bass), and Andrew (drums).

MRR: So there *were* a lot of people in the band?
Robbie: Yeah, over the years. Folks came and went as they pleased. I always believed the right people to be in the band were people who wanted to be in the band, regardless of their musical abilities.

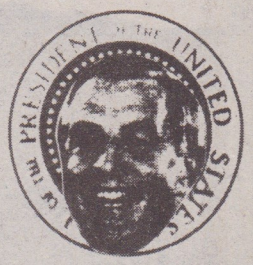
MRR: How did A State of Mind function as a band? Was the band run as a collective? How did you keep things organized?
Kevin: Allison, Robbie, and I started the band back in Philadelphia, PA, circa 1983. Allison was putting out a fanzine called *Savage Pink* at the time, and Robbie had just left his previous band the Sadistic Exploits. Somehow or another Robbie hooked up with Crucifix, an anarchist punk band from the San Francisco Bay Area, and was organizing their east coast tour for them. ASOM formed, wrote a few songs, and warmed up for Crucifix when they came through Philly.
Robbie: A few months after the tour the three of us moved to the Bay Area. Crucifix was living in an anarchist/artist warehouse in Emeryville, CA, called New Method so we moved in with them. They introduced us to the anarchist punk community, including Rip and Carolyn, and it wasn't long before we started jamming. New Method was the center of anarchist punk activity back in the day…and artistic activity too.

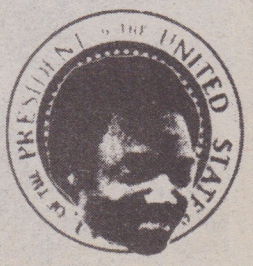




> "She's your personalized whore/this woman your wife/you fuck her and fuck her but still want more/you tell her you love her so you can achieve your dirty deal/not giving a fuck about the way she feels/forced actions of submission, bondage, rape/HELP!/with your macho fucking hard-on her feelings can not be felt/you talk about her as if she's just a slab of meat/ something you bought from the store/used up and forgotten next week"
> —"To Love and Honor" ASOM, 1982

MRR: Who wrote the songs? Did you have band rehearsals and jam, or did various members bring in conceived songs and present them to the band?
Robbie: Often times we'd start writing music because we wanted to put out a message on vinyl or we'd have a gig coming up.
Greg: The band rehearsed in Rip's space at New Method. We recorded "Grass So Green" there and the other songs on the *What's the Difference? Animal/Humyn Exploitation* single.
Robbie: And we recorded the *Don't Vote…Subvert!* and *Racism in America* flexi-discs in the space Kevin, Allison, and I lived in, also in New Method.
Greg: Some of our other stuff was recorded at a place on Union Street where Crucifix recorded *Dehumanization?*
Greg: Robbie was always the glue that kept things together, and the most mature of us—at least when I was playing in the band.
Kevin: Honestly, Robbie was the backbone of the band…the driving force behind it all.
Robbie: I think the band was run as a collective. We were all living in a couple of units at New Method. Allison, Kevin, and I lived in one unit for a bit; Rip and MKultra lived in another unit, and then Greg, Verm, Kiwi, Juliet, and I moved into a larger unit. There weren't many rules that I can remember. We were all pretty much on the same page and of the same mindset.
Rip: More or less. Sometimes less.
Kevin: People came and went according to their time but Robbie was the glue that kept it all together. He had the most band experience since he was in Sadistic Exploits before ASOM.
Greg: Regarding recording and writing, Carolyn and Rip were very creative guitarists. You could tell them "A chord" and they'd play something totally different.
Rip: [laughing]





MRR: That is creative!
Rip: I'm still the same way today!
Greg: It's true. You guys were awesome.
Robbie: I think Greg, Rip, and Carolyn were really the creative energy behind the band.
Rip: Thanks, Robbie!
Greg: I always thought ASOM was a tool for accomplishing Mind Matter Records and getting messages out. Sometimes I think we were "anti-music" because our message was more important than the music. We probably should have spent more time on the music.
Rip: The necessity to get the message out drove the music.
Greg: Running the record label and taking part in protests always seemed just as important as the band.
Rip: I think it's important to remember the punk ethic: that the music was "part" of the movement…not the reason for the movement.
Greg: Exactly, Rip. And that's exactly what ASOM and Mind Matter Records tried to do—use music to move the movement forward.
Kevin: We produced literature and pamphlets as well.
Chris: Yeah, I remember I was living in western Massachusetts and I saw an ad in a punk fanzine for Robbie's "Anarchy for Punks" literature, so I wrote him for a copy. Some time later, I received a packet of info on anarchism in the mail from him. Then one day, I went into a local record store that had a few anarchist magazines sitting on a shelf, and lo and behold one of them had a photo of anarcho-punks sitting in front of a warehouse on the front cover. The related story detailed what was being described as a burgeoning squatting scene in the Bay Area. I sold my stuff, bought a sturdy backpack and bedroll, and headed off across Interstate 80 on a Greyhound bus to the Bay Area. I crashed for a day or two with Robbie and Juliet at their place, and eventually was asked to join ASOM.

MRR: One of the incredible aspects of the band is the mixture of styles in the music—the first flexi included rap and chants with punk music, later on you mixed in folk music, sound collages and avant-garde music. How did that happen? It seemed like with every recording I heard, A State of Mind experimented with new sounds (which I loved), while most bands became formulaic. I'd love to hear how you came up with these songs.
Robbie: I'll leave this question for the musicians to answer.

MRR: But that was you singing on the first flexi, right Rob?
Robbie: If you can call it that. Yeah, it was me.
Rip: I was influenced musically by Crass, but other weirder stuff as well.

MRR: But basically, the music evolved as the band evolved?
Robbie: No, I wouldn't say that. I think we were always open to exploring alternative forms of music, so if someone came in with a riff, we went with it. There wasn't a lot of discussion. We'd just bang it out. There wasn't "anytime to mess around with rock'n'roll," we were "fighting to resist their control." "Act now, act fast!"
Rip: Right, Robbie, we would just jam and go with it.
Kevin: We knew we didn't want to be just another band; that we wanted to be different and reach out to people. We all contributed something even though our interests and musical tastes were so different.

Greg: The music always seemed to take a backseat to the message. I don't remember spending much time on the music, but I wish we had. Robbie was a great front man, and Carolyn and Rip were wicked creative, so we could have been really good if we were focused on the entire package as opposed to just the message.

MRR: "There isn't any time to mess around with rock'n'roll" is a great line!
Robbie: Oh yeah! We were all so very passionate about our work.
Greg: Rip and Carolyn accented the music perfectly.
Robbie: Agreed. And Greg's harmonies were incredible! Way beyond what ASOM was capable of doing without him. Ask anyone from the scene what their favorite ASOM song was and they'll tell you "Grass So Green," which Greg wrote, played, and sang.

MRR: That's my favorite ASOM song. I really enjoyed the acoustic guitar and harmonies. How did you become interested in anarchist politics? Where did this influence come from?
Robbie: Allison, Kevin, and I used to hang out at the Anarchist Book Store in Philadelphia in the late 1970s/early 1980s. I was in a band called the Sadistic Exploits at the time, and I was trying to turn that band into an anarchist band to no avail.
Rip: The anarchist punk band Discharge did it for me. Actually, it was the Sex Pistols, lets be honest.
Kevin: For me it was Crass.
Chris: Well, I first got involved in anarchist politics through the punk scene. Once I heard Crass and anarcho-punk or, if you like, peace punk bands, I was kind of blindsided by the notion that anarchy had two definitions: one being a state of chaos that the Sex Pistols and others were espousing for mere shock value, and the second being a society that is organized without government. I can remember being intrigued and, after poring over the voluminous collection of agit-prop that came with every Crass record, heading off to the public library to read more about anarchy and anarchism. It was there that I found an anthology of anarchism and read the works of Peter Kropotkin, Emma Goldman, and a host of other philosophers who were writing about a society without government.

So, I guess you could say that the Sex Pistols got me listening to Crass, who then got me to read Emma Goldman. That was my path to anarchist enlightenment, if you will.
Greg: For me, it was a natural process. I was the typical suburban punk who moved to the city and got sick of the punk/hardcore scene really quick. It was violent and misogynist, etc. I sought something more political and found Robbie, Allison, and ASOM. It was exactly what I wanted.
Rip: Yes, punk rock was always about busting down the line between the "band" and the "audience."
Kevin: We weren't a hardcore band by any means.

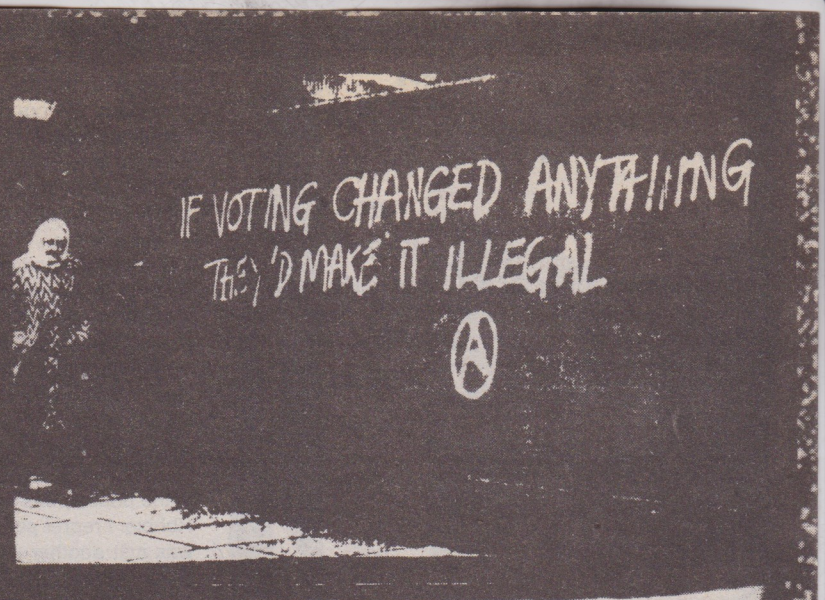
MRR: That's what was so attractive about ASOM for me. It seemed so much more than just a band type of thing.
Robbie: I believe it was. It was a way of life.

MRR: I had heard Crass before I heard ASOM, but it was so foreign to me. ASOM made it more real somehow.
Greg: Back then, when you signed onto punk, there were certain politics you had to abide by: animal

rights, anarchist, anti-government, etc, so the transition from punk to anarchist punk was natural. At the time, the punk scene was dividing: positive punk, peace punk, crossover, etc. Hardcore was dying.

Robbie: Personally, I never really cared about the music and I think our records demonstrate that. Don't get me wrong. Punk ran through my veins as much as the next guy, but I was more than punk. I was revolutionary and I used music as a forum for my work.

Greg: Robbie always had a great punk look—naturally spiky hair, skinny, etc.



"Burn the flags, tear them down/They're part of the system which holds us bound/Break down the walls that separate us/Destroy the system which promotes distrust/Nation against nation, team against team/ They divide up the masses into those extremes/ Commie or capitalist, which is your choice?/Either way you choose you haven't got a fucking voice/So it's time to fucking act/A united people in the attack/ Working together freed from their grasp/Act now.... act fast!"

—"Shit's Pride," ASOM, 1986

MRR: On the first flexi disc, *Don't Vote...Subvert!* you addressed voting (or not voting). What was the impetus behind this—the 1984 presidential election? Do you still feel that voting doesn't change anything? In what why is our current political climate like it was in 1984?

Kevin: Yes, I still feel voting doesn't change anything.

Robbie: The 1984 elections and the Democrats' efforts to fuck up the ticket drove us to develop the *Don't Vote...Subvert!* flexi-disc. If you remember Mondale, Gary Hart, John Glenn, and Jesse Jackson were on the Democratic ticket running against Ronald Reagan. What a mess. I remember going to the Democratic convention in SF and taking part in the riots there. Fun times. Anyway, the flexi was a Liberte?/ASOM collaboration where some members of ASOM worked with some friends to write and record some songs real quick. We sold the disc for a dollar each.

Rip: Yeah, we were there protesting and the whole thing got out of control. I remember cops pulling out guns at the protesters. Hey, if you think the Democrats are any different from the Republicans...

Kevin: I was doing anarchist street theater during the entire convention.

Robbie: Yeah, I think it's safe to say the election drove that effort. Our best product I think. Rip did the recording on a small 4-track, and played incredible guitar on it. I loved that guitar Rip!

Rip: Yeah, Robbie was mad at me when the flexi-disc came back sped up a notch, but we had a fun time recording that in your space, Robbie.

Robbie: Carolyn played bass on "The Candidates Rap" Mark K. played bass on "So Fuck Voting" and Greg played drums throughout.

Greg: Yeah, that was odd because I really didn't know how to play drums!

Chris: Regarding the similarities between 1984 and today—the Cold War is over but the Taliban are now our enemy, the EU exists but China has emerged as an economic and military powerhouse, so yes, the political climate in the United States is very similar. I mean, the turn towards neo-liberalism that started in the mid to late '70s was put into full swing with the Reagan Revolution. And, even with the arrival of the current crisis, Obama is following the same script. Hello, Paul Volker, nice to see you again. Health care reform has turned out to be a boon for the health insurance industry, guaranteeing them millions of new customers and billions in taxpayer dollars to cover poor folks who will be getting insurance subsidies from the government. Seems to me that Reagan would welcome this. Is Obama pro labor? Well, he got behind the workers when they took over their workplace, but now he favors the tactics of union-busting. He applauded the decision by a Rhode Island school board to fire all of the teachers and administrators at an under-performing school. We were covertly involved in two wars in 1984 (El Salvador and Nicaragua); today we are overtly involved in two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. I could go on, but I think that the similarities in the political climate are mainly due to the narrowness of the political discourse in the United States. Members of both parties are beholden to corporate interests. The differences between the two parties are negligible.

"Voting on any scale large or small/does it really mean freedom for us all/ does it really make a difference/does it really mean your free/shouldn't the decisions that the government makes be made by you and me/does it really mean you've had your say/it's just another one of the games they play/it's a mockery of what your life's become/it's just a masturbation of a presupposed freedom/the system has failed us so many times before/so what the fuck are you voting for?"

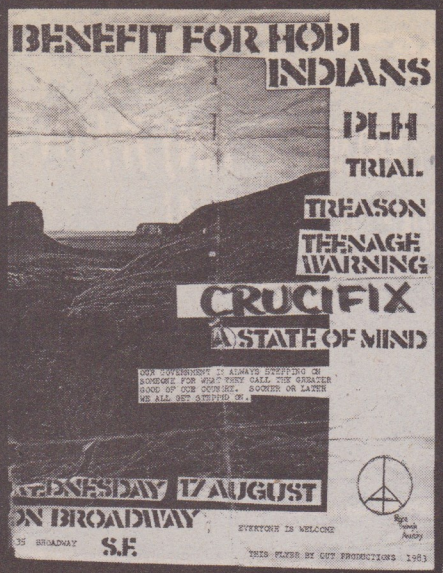
—So Fuck Voting, ASOM, 1984

MRR: The second flexi-disc, *Racism in America*, contained one of my favorite songs by Liberte?/ASOM, entitled, "Tribal Territorial Talks." It had a funk beat and some great weird noises mixed in there with a Crass-like guitar. What was the impetus behind the song?

Robbie: *Racism in America* was a project MKultra and I initiated under the name Liberte? We worked with other ASOM members to do the flexi-disc. We were both attending a racism course at a local community college in Oakland, and the teacher, a radical Cuban, really inspired us, so we did the disc to get the word out to folks. We sold that flexi for a buck as well.

"The American public are crucified/Our human rights have been denied/ Black or white, red or yellow/The races of this nation must come together/The system creates hatred to divide us all/Setting tribe against tribe in a territorial brawl/"honkey" hates the "nigger,"/ "the "nigger" feels the same/we don't know why but they're the rules of the game/Our ignorance for one another/Keeps us from being "brothers/We're not sure how to act or what to say/Lack of respect will end today/People are people and that's just that/Skin color don't matter and that's a fact/We all got minds, we all got souls/Use the brains ya got to resist their control."

— "Tribal Territorial Talks," ASOM, 1985



MRR: With the third record, *What's The Difference? Animal/Humyn Exploitation* 7" EP, you made the connection between animal exploitation and the exploitation of women, which was very different for the punk scene at the time. How did your ideas form, and how were they received in your performances?

Robbie: Honestly, I don't remember what caused us to make the connection between the two other than the obvious, that women are perceived as objects only to be exploited just as animals are.

Kevin: It just seemed to be a no-brainer…such an obvious connection at the time.

Robbie: I was inspired by Poison Girls back in the late 1970s. They were close friends of Crass but often took a feminist position in their message. I learned a lot from Crass and Poison Girls; and as time progressed, ASOM made the connection between exploitation of women and animals.

Greg: What was the name of that book we all read? *Animal Liberation*?

Rip: Yeah, and there was that movie we all went to see at University of California? That's when I threw my leather in the dumpster!

Greg: It seemed very natural to make those connections, and animal rights were prominent in the peace punk scene.

Robbie: I regret putting that 45 out to be honest. We got pigeonholed by it. Suddenly ASOM was just another animal rights group. We were so much more than just an animal rights group. I mean, why didn't people label us a women's rights band? We wrote far more songs about women's rights than we did about animal rights. I think most people missed the point of the 45 all together actually.

Greg: We were basically preaching to the converted. The "scene" was small and most people were vegetarian/vegan, and/or were for animal rights at the very least, so of course the message was well received.

MRR: I'm not so sure. I wasn't converted by any stretch. I was living in a redneck town back in Illinois and never heard of any of that kind of stuff.

Greg: If you didn't know what you were getting into when you went to a peace punk show, you would be flabbergasted at why so many nineteen year olds were sitting cross legged in front of the stage when the band was playing! Just living in a city like SF you are exposed to so many ideas. When you're young you're susceptible to what other, more experienced and cooler people think, so it only takes one person to tell you about exploitation and you're on board.

Rip: For me, a large element of "animal rights" was the wasting of the planet's resources, the pollution and world starvation that's perpetrated by the meat industry.

Kevin: And the meat industry is one of the largest contributors to global warming.

MRR: I agree Greg, but the magic of putting out records is that it ends up in places beyond the scene.

Greg: We live in a bubble here in the Bay Area, so sometimes it's hard to imagine what's going on in other places that aren't the Bay Area. We're arrogant when we think everybody outside of SF thinks like us. When you're in a scene, you think it's the only thing that exists. Peace/anarchy punk was like that. I was so dogmatic that I alienated tons of people.

Robbie: Yeah, Greg, but those experiences are all a part of growing up. We'd do things differently today, don't you think?

Greg: Oh, of course we would but when we were young we were very myopic.

Rip: We were young and idealistic.

Robbie: Hey, I'm not going to get down on ourselves. I don't have any regrets. We did a hell of a job given our age and limited financial resources. And we learned to work together internally and with other people externally. I think it's safe to say we all learned some valuable lessons from our ASOM experience.

Kevin: We were up against some powerful people, industries, and institutions.

Greg: True. I always look back on those days and remember the good. We were very productive. But it's easy to criticize some of our actions.

Robbie: Criticize our actions, Greg…or critique our actions? Anyway, I think most, if not all of us, are still pushing for social change in one fashion or another. Allison's in London working at Southern Records, Kevin's a wellness specialist, Greg's working for a community-based non-profit organization, Juliet's a fitness trainer, Chris has been carrying the revolutionary torch all these years, Rip's a recording engineer, Mark is an artist, and I'm working in the environmental conservation field. Lord Jim passed away, and I'm not sure what MKultra, Greg, and Andrew are up to. MKultra contacted me in 2008 but I've lost touch with him again.

MRR: Are you still vegetarian/vegan, and if so, what have been the challenges since you recorded the animal rights 45, and if not, how difficult was it to make the choice to eat meat again?

Rip: I'm still a vegetarian after 26 years. Vegetarianism is the number one thing you can contribute to the fight against global warming.

Greg: I gave it up in 2006. Not proud of the decision, knowing what I know about the benefits of being a veggie but it seemed natural. It just happened, like losing my hair.

Robbie: I was a vegetarian until I moved to Alaska in 2003. Now that I've recently moved back to the lower-48 I've been phasing it back into my lifestyle. I wonder why we aren't asking ourselves who's still an anarchist since we were primarily an anarchist band that happened to put out one animal exploitation 45.

MRR: Does anyone still consider themselves an anarchist?
Rip: I still consider myself an anarchist in a way, but I'm not trying to convince anyone of anything right now. I hate politics.
Kevin: Yes, I'm still an anarchist. Maybe more now than back then.
Robbie: I'll plead the fifth on whether I am or not, but I will say that I enjoy keeping informed about national and international affairs, so I guess I have a love/hate relationship with politics; but then again I always have. Watching Fox News, CNN, and MSNBC today only confirms my beliefs of 25 years ago that "the system is shit!"
Greg: I'm not an anarchist, liberal, conservative, libertarian, etc. I'm more pragmatic, beaten down by life and politics. To be in politics, you have to be a special person, willing to fight for your point of view. I don't have that much energy. I'm still a shit stirrer though, and feel like an idiot when I vote.
Chris: I'm active in politics again after years of not being so, and if asked to describe myself, I would again call myself an anarchist. At the time I left ASOM I was going through "activist burnout" and I disavowed anarchism as a fool's errand. I had become very cynical about the prospects for affecting any sort of positive change in society.

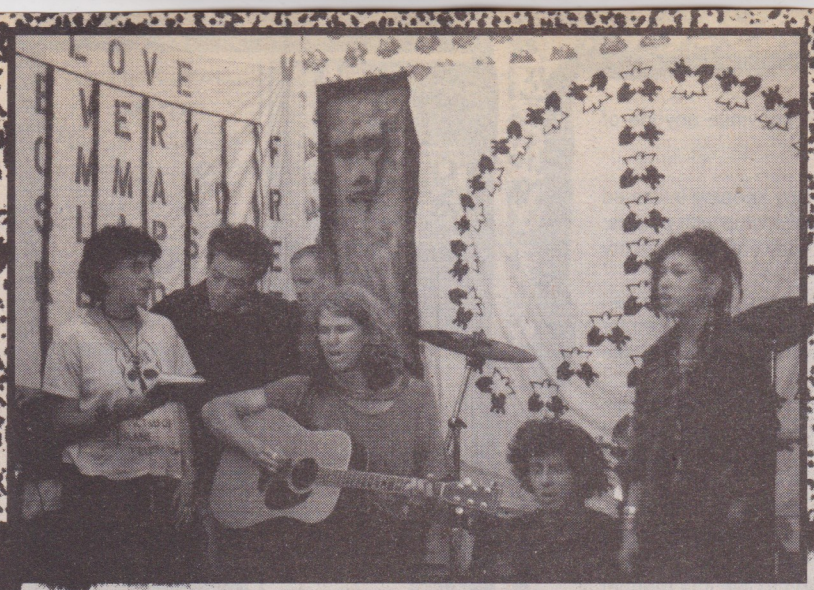
By the time I arrived in San Francisco in 1984 I believe that whatever peace-punk scene existed in the Bay Area was in a state of disarray. I seemed to me that, unlike what was taking place in England and other European countries, ASOM was the only band in the Bay Area that was still singing about anarchism, and, more importantly, attempting to live in a manner that "prefigures" the world that anarchists' envisioned (i.e, working towards creating a truly democratic and non-hierarchical society). So, when I was in the band, we all lived in New Method and shared evening meals together, but I'd hesitate before calling it a horizontally organized or communal living situation. To go a bit deeper, I would say that, as time went on, instead of doing the hard work of identifying and combating the complex and often subtle aspects of sexism, racism, homophobia, and classism that we, as activists, needed to be addressing in our own lives, there was more of a philosophy of "Okay, I'm proclaiming to be an anarchist, and, in doing so, I shed all oppressive aspects of my former pre-anarchist self. Having moved on to this anarchist space, I need not engage in self-reflexive observation or critique, because I have proclaimed to myself and all who will listen that I am against racism, sexism, homophobia, etc." The lack of a self-critical viewpoint lead to what I call "dead end" activism, which in turn led to activist burnout.

"It's a plain and simple fact/this system ain't worth a crap/this system has you conned/this system has you fooled/in believing that your vote really matters/everybody wants their say/but by voting they're taking it away/the system don't bring freedom/but voting brings the system/ then the system takes your freedom away/they tell us that we have a say/in their system they call democracy/but democracy has killed some poor souls that tried to say/that they're liars/ that their cons/that it's shit/shit/shit/shit."
—"Simply Stated," ASOM, 1984

MRR: Can you tell me how the last record, a split 7" with English anarchist punks Chumbawamba entitled *We are the World?* came about? I found it interesting to hear the musical growth of the band on this record too. The songs were longer and more intricate, mixing different instrumentation that created an intense listening experience. How did this develop?
Robbie: I first touched base with Chumbawamba in 1984 after they did an interview in *MRR*. We built a relationship with them over the course of a couple of years, and Allison, Kevin, and I traveled to England to visit them, Crass, Flux of Pink Indians, and John Loder (Southern Studios). At some point, someone said, "Hey, why don't we do a record together" and it was like... "Yeah, you bet!"
Greg: Then we just worked together to think about the theme of the record, artwork, etc.

MRR: Did you record with them, or did they record with you?
Robbie: They recorded their tracks in England and we recorded ours here in the states. The whole concept of the record was working together across boundaries to break down barriers.

MRR: For a long time, I thought you joined bands.
Robbie: Juliet and I went to England in 1986 to tour with them after the 45 came out. I remember a bobby [British cop] approached the van we were driving after one of the gigs and one of the Chumbas threw a blanket over our heads as we sat in the back seat. The bobby greeted Danbert [NoBacon] who was sitting behind the steering wheel of the van, and said in a very polite, well-mannered English accent "Good night gents" and Danbert just laid into him. "Why don't you go piss off and leave us alone! Blah, blah, blah." It was hilarious and alarming at the same time, because you talk that way to a cop in the states and you're doing jail time.
Greg: Chumba was a good band, very musical. Mind Matter Records put out Danbert's *Bigger Than Jesus* 7" in 1987.



MRR: Have you stayed in contact with Chumbawamba?
Robbie: I last saw them in DC circa 1997. They were touring the U.S. after "Tub Thumping" went gold. They were playing in some small hall, I don't remember what it was called. They were already playing by the time I arrived so I pushed my way through the crowd saying, "Let your elder through!" I stood right in front of Boffo the entire time, but he, nor anyone else, recognized me. Must have been the bright lights and all. After the gig, I went backstage and knocked on their dressing room door. Boff opened it and his jaw hit the floor immediately. It had been ten years since we last saw each other but he still recognized me.

Ian Mackaye from Minor Threat was hanging out backstage with them too. He and I had some history back in the early 1980s when his straightedge gang came up to Philly to see Black Flag and ultimately got into a rumble with the local anarchist punks. Anyway, Ian took the higher ground and immediately came over to apologize to me for the incident. I told him it was all water under the bridge and no hard feelings. I ended up hanging out with Chumbas in their rock n roll tour bus all night after the gig. Boffo and I have stayed in touch via email over the years and are planning on seeing each other on the east coast this winter.

MRR: What was it like to perform in public? I'm trying to recall, and my memory is fuzzy some 25 years after the fact, but it seems like you guys played at a place called Club Foot. Is that correct? Were performances extra-musical? Did you have art and politics mixed in with the performances?
Robbie: We actually didn't play too often. We wanted each show to be extra special, and put a lot of work into the early gigs to make them special.
Greg: We played a couple of gigs at Club Foot, a benefit concert for the Hopi Indians at On Broadway, our own sponsored gig at New Method, and a few gigs while touring with Iconoclast (LA).
Robbie: Personally, I loved performing live. I used to get really pumped up. It was invigorating.
Rip: Yes, some of us did paint walls, Robbie. Club Foot was one of my more memorable gigs. I believe we played with Crucifix one night there.

MRR: It seemed as though the art was equally as important as the music. Is that true?
Greg: Art as in multimedia, yeah. We produced a lot and were very creative.
Rip: Some of us painted "Don't Vote."
Robbie: Early on we designed banners, used TVs, and distributed materials during our performances. We did less of that as time went on. It took a lot of energy to pull all that together. I don't know if we could do all that today.
MRR: I bet!
Greg: Yes. Very hard. Let the young people do it. They can do it even better today than we did back then.

MRR: How was ASOM received in the Bay Area? Were you able to find gigs before Gilman St. opened for shows? How were you received?
Robbie: We didn't play in Berkeley until Gilman opened up circa 1986. There wasn't anywhere to play all ages shows, except for the one we did in Rip's space in New Method. That was a great anarchist punk show! I don't know why we didn't host more gigs there.

MRR: So, you mostly played at Club Foot in SF?
Robbie: A few gigs, but remember, we didn't play a lot of gigs overall, unfortunately.

Greg: At one of the Club Foot gigs, we put a wide-mouth jar at the door with a sign that read: "Donations Accepted" instead of making people pay a fixed price.
Greg: We didn't want to play gigs. We played events.
Robbie: I seem to remember us always having a good turnout at our shows, which is truly amazing since we didn't play that much and get our name out there that much.
Greg: All the shows were well received. There were a lot of peace punk bands but not many shows, so when there was one, the entire scene supported it. Robbie, do you remember our men's group? We met once or twice with men from the community to talk about "men's issues." I remember hanging up fliers around the community. God, I wish I had one of those flyers! I don't remember the details of our discussions, but I'm sure they were very emotional and touching.
Rip: Remember when Robbie did a solo performance in Santa Cruz. He just sat on the ground and read from a book. He started off with "Let me tell you, I'm scared" and went on from there.
Greg: Yeah, a great start to a reading.
Kevin: We always busted on him for that.

MRR: When did ASOM break up? In fact, was there a formal breakup?
Robbie: I remember getting totally burned out on the whole business end of Mind Matter Records, and I was starting to find formal education more fulfilling than ASOM. I finally decided to leave the group in 1987 and Juliet and I moved out of the warehouse. When she and I ended our relationship, I moved into a non-punk, vegetarian collective in East Oakland called Fort Peralta. I cut off my dreadlocks and started vegetable gardening and raising free-range chickens for their eggs. I continued studying until I left CA in 1989 to transfer to a college in Upstate New York to study environmental conservation.
Greg: I remember Robbie and I having a falling out. I don't recall if it was about Mind Matter Records or a phone bill that was in his name. Anyway, I think Robbie moved out because the ASOM collective was falling apart, and in fact, it was all over by October of that year. I joined Short Dogs Grow and had gone on tour. When I got back six weeks later I found the space had turned into a party scene. We got evicted shortly thereafter, which was good, because everyone could just move on with their lives, but it was a sad ending to our time at New Method.
Robbie: I think we just got tired. We were young, idealistic, trying to live our anarchist dream, masterminding a revolution, running a record label, etc. It was just all too much.
Rip: We were kids after all.
Greg: Robbie got a job as a warehouseman for The Nature Company in Berkeley and started hanging out with the Social Unrest folks.
Robbie: I went to Cuba for a couple of weeks with the *Venceramos* ("We Will Enter") Brigade to learn about the Cuban revolution. When I returned to The Nature Company I had discovered the family business had been sold to a multi-national corporation, so I worked with the employees to form a union (International Longshoreman and Warehouseman Union). I sat on the negotiating committee to hammer out a contract between the company and the employees, then I was elected to be the shop steward responsible for ensuring the contract was upheld. It was fun sticking it to the boss man, which is totally ironic because now I'm the boss man at work!
Rip: I think the stuff I was exploring at the time became more internalized.

MRR: Would you ever entertain the thought of regrouping either for a recording project or performance?
Robbie: We're thinking of a reunion recording on July 4th.
Kevin: An appropriate time for a gathering of anarchists, don't you think?

TREAT ME LIKE DIRT

AN ORAL HISTORY OF PUNK IN TORONTO AND BEYOND

1977 1981

LIZ WORTH

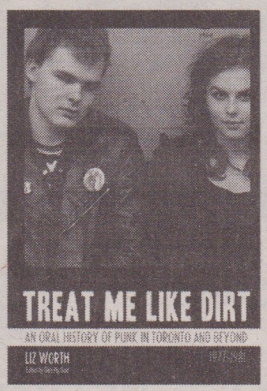
EDITED BY GARY PIG GOLD

This is the finest oral history of one punk scene I've ever seen. Given how little is generally known about what happened on the shores of Lake Ontario simultaneously to The Ramones, Sex Pistols, Saints, Weirdos, Avengers, etc., and how vital the big four (to New Yorkers then), The Viletones, Teenage Head, Diodes, and B-Girls were, **this book is actually more indispensable in telling a largely lost narrative.** (It also reinforces how 1977 punk's creative cultural freedom assault and visceral expression threatened just by existing, including a archetypal account of bouncers beating punks with pool cues for the transgression of dressing/thinking/acting differently!)

For this writer, reading of dimly recalled acts such as The Dishes, Ugly, Scenics, Simple Saucer, The Curse, Poles, etc., as well as the original Diodes-run 1977 Crash 'n' Burn club - and the bands' CBGB trips I do recall - had me staying up nights for weeks.

- JACK RABID, The Big Take Over

VILETONES, DIODES, B-GIRLS, TEENAGE HEAD, CURSE, POLES, FORGOTTEN REBELS, SIMPLY SAUCER, UGLY, ETC...



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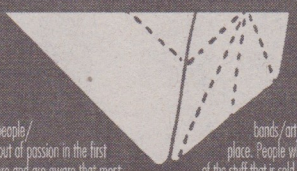

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Gabriel Kuhn's book "Sober Living for the Revolution" *looks at political punk through the niche of straight edge. It features interviews with key people behind bands such as Minor Threat, ManLiftingBanner and Refused. It's got scene reports from Israel, Sweden, Poland and the U.S. It's got manifestos that originally appeared as pamphlets or in zines, such as "Wasted Indeed: Anarchy and Alcohol" by Crimethinc. and "Towards a Less Fucked Up World: Sobriety and Anarchist Struggle" by Nick Riotfag (both with follow up interviews). And it's got some sharp reflections and perspectives by folks like Jenni Ramme of the Emancypunx feminist hardcore label out of Poland and Mark Andersen from Positive Force DC.*

The book is essential for anyone who likes hardcore punk and wonders how to stay positive in a world that works hard to grind down political ideals.

*Kuhn was born in Austria and has lived in Italy, Turkey, England and the United States. He has written about the legacy of pirates (*Life Under the Jolly Roger*), translated famous anarchist works into English (including* Revolution and Other Writings *by Gustav Landauer) and has a book coming soon on radical politics and soccer* (Soccer vs. the State)*. In addition to having done zines, he's got a PhD in philosophy and used to be a semi-pro soccer player. He now lives in Sweden.*

We connected by email about Sober Living for the Revolution.

Interview by Mark David Robison

MRR: As I was putting these questions together, I realized that most music publications thrive on the image of music fans drinking alcohol or doing other drugs. As radical or independent as they might claim to be, many won't want to challenge their readers' attitude toward getting wasted. How have music publications responded to your book, if at all? And do you have a feeling for how it has been viewed in the straight edge scene?

So far, the response from music publications has been really good, actually. There was even a positive review in *Classic Rock*, where the book appeared between images of Led Zeppelin and Vince Neil.

I think that *Sober Living…* has been generally well received in non-straight-edge circles. Many people associate mainly negative things with straight edge—self-righteousness, dogmatism, conservativism—and the book just gives them a different perspective. Reactions like "This really sheds a new light on straight edge for me" or "I had never thought of straight edge that way" have been pretty common.

Expectedly, within the straight edge scene the book has been mostly welcomed by people who embrace progressive and radical politics. Outside of that realm, I'm not sure how many people have even read it. There was some hope that the book might contribute to a "re-politicization" of the straight edge scene, and of the hardcore scene in general, but I'm not seeing any immediate effect like that; probably for the simple reason that most non-political hardcore kids can't be bothered reading a book about hardcore and politics—a lot of them reject politics entering the scene. The problem of course is that you can never get away from politics. In his interview for the book, Ian MacKaye speaks of the "Apathetic Party" as the dominant political party in the U.S. This is where you get by being "non-political." Still, in the long run I hope that the book can have an effect, at least in indirect ways. It might motivate some progressive/radical folks in the scene to be more outspoken about their views, it might add arguments to discussions about the politics of hardcore and straight edge, etc. It'd be great if it could leave a trace in some form.

MRR: Just so punk-savvy readers know where you're coming from, what does "straight edge" mean to you?

I'm pretty old school in my definition: straight edge means abstaining from alcohol, tobacco, and common illegal drugs like cannabis, amphetamines, and so on. I don't think a caffeine addiction is very straight edge either, but I wouldn't count someone out for having tea or a caffeinated soda every once in a while—in fact, I do too. The same goes for refined sugar or other substances that have been put on taboo lists by some straight edgers, health is an important aspect of being straight edge, but obsession is hardly ever healthy.

Sexuality doesn't play a big role in my understanding of straight edge, other than sexual conduct being included in a broader notion of responsible behavior. However, responsible sexual behavior for me is tied to honesty, respect, and consent; it has nothing to do with sexual orientation, sexual practices, the number of your partners, or wedding rings.

Finally, I don't include animal rights in my definition. I'm all for animal rights and I'm happy to see animal rights and straight edge combined, but to me there is no inherent connection. As I said, I'm pretty old school that way.

MRR: In the book, you write a lot about how people have carried a revolutionary viewpoint into adulthood and stayed true to it. Having studied these different people—and, of course, also seeing people who gave up on the punk and straight edge spirit—what do you think a couple of the secrets are to staying true to one's ideals as our corporate culture of comfort grinds away at our resolve?

It seems that these are two questions in one. First, why do some people stay straight edge and others don't? I believe that there are three main reasons for people staying straight edge for a long time: 1. You never enjoyed the feeling of being intoxicated. 2. You rejected drug culture early on, never developed a taste or need for it, and being drug-free became a deeply rooted part of your identity. 3. You suffered from serious addiction problems and straight edge helped you turn your life around. All of these reasons are mainly personal. In my experience, many people who got into straight edge for moral or ideological reasons might have been among the most militant but also among the quickest to disappear. They often left the scene behind as soon as something else seemed more convincing or simply trendier. I think that people stay straight edge because it resonates with how they feel most comfortable in their lives.

REFUSED
Photo by Ricky Adam

This does not mean that these people can't see political dimensions in their straight edge identity; after all, *Sober Living...* explores these dimensions! But it means that there is an important personal element in straight edge, and a lot of straight edge politics are about that; let us recall the "It's OK Not to Drink" shirts: you are basically demanding respect for who you are. To me, this also implies respecting others who make different personal choices. Whether people drink beer or not is not decisive; decisive is how awareness and responsibility shapes people's behavior.

The second implication of your question concerns a more general point: how do we stay true to ideals even if they differ from the norm and if the effort makes our lives difficult? I'm not sure if I have an answer. I think that if you cherish something strongly enough, this sentiment will always outweigh the disadvantages it might bring in life. How much of these disadvantages you are able to take, in the case of straight edge mainly social exclusion, ridicule, and negative stereotyping, differs from person to person. Some give up their principles sooner than others when it becomes difficult to maintain them. What always helps of course is a strong circle of friends and a wide network of like-minded folks who let you know that you are not alone. This, in fact, is one of the main arguments for embracing the label "straight edge" rather than simply living a "drug-free life." The former sends a strong message to confused kids: it lets them know that there is a community where they can feel that they belong. For me, growing up in a small Austrian town where alcohol-culture was everywhere and where I was the only one among my peers to reject it, this was crucial; I don't know if I could have resisted the peer pressure without it.

MRR: You have said you grew up in a place where boys were expected to start drinking in their early teens and you were pleased to find a music scene that fit with your stance. What were some of the bands that helped the world seem a little smaller back then? Were there any particular songs or lyrics that especially spoke to you?

When I discovered straight edge around 1990, I first turned to the standard reference points: Minor Threat, Youth of Today, Bold, etc. All the straightforward messages about "having the straight edge" and "thinking straight" appealed to me. Then, in the context of early 1990s straight edge, Refused played an important role because they stood for the new wave of straight edge on the one hand—metalcore, hip-hop inspired aesthetics, a strong focus on animal rights—without falling into the conservative pitfalls that were around on the other. Among North American bands, Chokehold played a similar role, I guess. I also liked Snapcase because they had a rather philosophical approach to straight edge, and I liked the spiritual approach of Shelter, although I always had my political reservations when it came to the Krishna movement. Interestingly enough, some bands that I find really important today kind of passed me by when they were around, ManLiftingBanner would be a prime example.

MRR: The book looks into specific areas within the straight edge world, such as gay and feminist scenes, as well as those around the world such as in Israel, Portugal and Sweden. I've especially noticed a lot of bands lately putting feminism at the top of their issues lists. What philosophical issues do you see getting attention today in straight edge and where do you see vibrant scenes?

Straight edge has become so diverse that any answer to these questions will necessarily be simplified, but I'll give it a try; please note that this is a very personal perspective, though.

I think especially in the U.S., ecological issues have become really strong in the more politically oriented straight edge scene in recent years. Bands like 7 Generations and Gather had really important things to say about this, and the same is true for some of the acoustic straight edge acts we see today, like True Nature or Mike XVX. I would also agree that feminism has become an important topic for many bands. The same goes for sexuality and

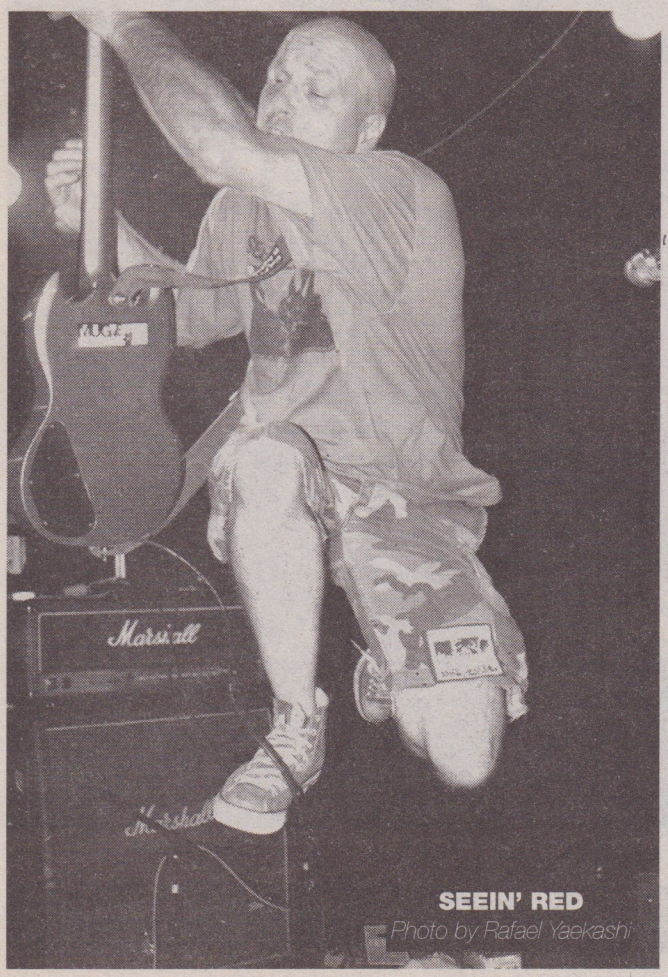
queer culture. It is not by coincidence that these issues are well covered in the book. Where I still see deficits is in the analysis of race and class. I hope that a lot more will happen there.

As far as vibrant scenes go, I really can't pick out any particular country or region. As I said, straight edge has become really diverse, and this is also true geographically. There is a lot of exciting stuff happening in many places around the world, new media and communication platforms like MySpace have certainly contributed to this; perhaps they have even weakened the importance of the "local scene," although this is a risky thesis.

One thing I really like about the scene in Latin America is the particular political angle it takes on drug culture. While in North America and Europe, the analysis mostly focuses on the consumers' end, straight edge kids in Latin America focus a lot on the aspects of production: How does drug culture affect farmers in Latin America? How does the drug trade affect local economies and communities? I find this fascinating.

MRR: One of your talents has been translating anarchist writings. Did your interest in anarchism in specific, and philosophy in general, spring out of straight edge or is that coincidental? Are there any anarcho-punk bands you have a soft spot for?

My interest in anarchism and philosophy did not stem from straight edge. Those were fairly separate developments. Whether they were "coincidental" is another question. I guess my interest in anarchism and philosophy was related to my rejection of drug culture in the sense that the latter took too much time from the things I really wanted to do: read books, be politically active, etc. So these aspects of my life kind of formed a union, but it wasn't like one inspired the other.



SEEIN' RED
Photo by Rafael Yaekashi

Anarcho-punk bands certainly had an influence on me; I think this is true for most political straight edgers. Crass and Conflict were the ones I listened to most.

MRR: What does anarchism mean to you? Do you consider yourself an anarchist?

On a very basic level, anarchism means self-responsibility to me. I'd like to quote Craig O'Hara's *The Philosophy of Punk*: "Anarchy does not simply mean no laws, it means no need for laws." The key is people taking enough responsibility in relation to others that the main ideological justification for the state, keeping social peace, becomes futile. As a consequence, all the repressive implications of the state and its institutions would disappear as well. Of course there are a number of requirements for anarchist communities to work: the embrace and practical implementation of values like social equality, compassion, respect, communication, etc. I think that throughout history there have been many examples where this was reality. You can often hear the argument that this might work for small, tight-knit communities but not for complex societies. Whether this is true or not, the future will show. In any case, I think you can never go wrong in basing your everyday moral decisions on the ideal of anarchy, no matter the current political circumstances. In that sense, yes, I do consider myself an anarchist: I want people to develop as freely as possible in an environment of mutual aid, social justice, and egalitarian decision-making. To me, anarchism is the movement that works towards that aim.

MRR: Anarchist and straight edge bands usually have an aggressive sound. An anarchist vegan straight edge band? Without even hearing it, you almost know that's going to be aggression to an extreme degree. Is there something about anarchism and straight edge that inspires such a hard sound?

I think that things have changed with respect to the sound. I have already mentioned acts like Mike VXV, here you have an anarchist vegan straight edge performer whose music will please any Ani DiFranco fan. (I hope neither of the two will take that as an offense!) True, most vegan straight edge bands, including anarchist ones, have played fairly aggressive music, but we must not forget that straight edge came out of hardcore, which, by definition, is an aggressive musical genre. Kids were angry and they wanted to express that. So, if you will, there is a cultural reason for the way most straight bands sound like. But it is certainly neither anarchism nor being drug-free that inspires aggressive music – there are plenty of examples that prove the opposite, from anarchist singer-songwriters like Léo Ferré to sober pop stars like Shania Twain.

MRR: You've been put on a "No Fly" list by the U.S. government and had to cancel a trip to the United States. The "No Fly" list seems to be a Kafkaesque situation where you aren't told what you've done or how you can correct it and someday you might discover you've been taken off the list. Are there any updates on your status? Is it true that you could fly here under the Bush administration but not under Obama? Do you have any inkling why you're on the list?

Your description of the Kafkaesque character of the "No Fly" list is apt: you are told that you can't travel to the U.S. but, in the name of national security, no one tells you why. So, essentially, you don't even know what the accusation is that you have to fight.

Some prominent academics have had their bans lifted after campaigns led by influential organizations like the PEN American Center, the American Association of University Professors, and the American Civil Liberties Union, Hillary Clinton finally signed a waiver for them. As you can imagine, this will work for less than one percent of all the people who find themselves on the "No Fly" list. Others, like myself, can only hope for a reformation of the system, which seems more probable than what it might sound like since the "anti-terrorist lists" have become so bloated that they are entirely ineffective, which even conservative lawmakers concede.

The most likely reason for ending up on the list was the problems I had entering the country in 2005. I was interrogated by Homeland Security and FBI agents at Philadelphia Airport for seven hours. This was due to having visited Arab countries prior to coming to the U.S., carrying a book about the Black Panther Party, and other things. In the end, there was nothing to prove any "terrorist connections"—surprise!—and since I had a valid F1/F2 visa at the time I couldn't just be refused entry. After an attempt to trick me into returning to Europe voluntarily (based on some threats that didn't make much sense), I was allowed to enter but the duration of my stay was reduced from six months to four weeks, and, as I find now, my name was apparently added to the "No Fly" list. So, yes, I was allowed to enter under the Bush regime, yet it was still under the Bush regime that I was put on the list, barring me from further entries. In any case, I think that immigration is one of the issues where the Obama administration has made no progress to its predecessor whatsoever. And the so-called "ideological exclusion" that I'm experiencing is only the pettiest aspect of it all! For thousands of people, livelihoods are at stake when it comes to immigration policies. This is really something that activists must turn their attention to, and not just in Arizona!

Right now, there are only two ways for me to get back to the U.S.: either there will be a general overhaul of the system, or I'll try to start a long and costly legal process. Since for someone like me the latter seems rather unpromising, I'm hoping for the former. But if nothing changes within the next few years, I might try my legal luck anyway. I've been traveling to the U.S. regularly since I was nine years old and many of my best friends are there, so the ban does have personal implications that go beyond just being denied entry to the country. I'll just have to wait and see.

MRR: Finally, if there's someone out there who wants to learn about anarchism or straight edge and they just want a small taste to see if it speaks to them, what would you recommend for each, music-wise and reading-wise?

Reading-wise, there are a few great concise introductions into anarchism. Colin Ward's *Anarchy in Action* from 1973 is a bit of a modern-day classic. A very useful recent publication is Cindy Milstein's *Anarchism and its Aspirations.* Literature on straight edge is sparse, but Beth Lahickey's *All Ages: Reflections on Straight Edge* contains great interviews about straight edge in the 1980s and the straight edge chapter in Brian Peterson's excellent *Burning Fight: The Nineties Hardcore Revolution in Ethics, Politics, Spirit, and Sound* does the same with respect to the 1990s. For an overall history and sociological analysis of straight edge in the U.S., I'd recommend Ross Haenfler's *Straight Edge: Clean-Living Youth, Hardcore Punk, and Social Change.*

Music-wise, things are more difficult as there is so much stuff out there: a hundred straight edgers would give you a hundred different answers. But, okay, if I limit myself to five records, I'd say that if you check out the Minor Threat discography, Youth of Today's *Break Down the Walls*, Earth Crisis' *Firestorm* EP, Point of No Return's *Liberdade Imposta, Liberdade Conquistada (Imposed Freedom, Conquered Freedom)* and Have Heart's *Songs to Scream at the Sun*, you get a pretty good sense for how straight edge developed musically. But if you want to get into the nuances, you'd literally have to listen to hundreds of bands.

LARM
Photo by Helge Schrieber

BOOKS

Firebrands: Portraits from the Americas
Justseeds Artists' Cooperative
Edited by Shawn Slifer & Bec Young
178 pages • $10.00
Microcosm Publishing
222 S. Rogers St.
Bloomington, IN 47404
www.microcosmpublishing.com

Many will remember the *Celebrate People's History* poster series from the past decade. These were full-color portraits and mini-biographies of inspiring people. The *Firebrands* book shrinks the portraits but expands the biographies into an essential book. The focus here is on 78 "radicals, dissidents, folk singers and rabble-rousers" from the Americas. Twenty illustrators were employed. I was familiar with about half of the subjects. The entries were as inspiring and heartbreaking as any anthology of poets.

What they've done here is no small accomplishment: writing concise, clear biographies coupled with righteous portraits. The image and text work in conjunction here, neither riding roughshod over the other. The bios are especially great. Tupac's entry for instance focuses more on the peace treaty he brokered between the gangs rather than MTV and later fame. Similarly, I did not know about the anti-racist work and hospital visits that Roberto Clemente did off the baseball diamond.

Which is why a book like this is so crucial—visually appealing, clearly written and of timeless appeal. I'm not so naïve as to imagine this supplanting high school history books or becoming a bestseller. There is small, needed relief in seeing a book championing those "too brown, too female, too poor, too queer, too uneducated, too disabled, or because they daydreamed too much."

No anthology will be complete (or please everyone) but *Firebrands* does an admirable overview of Howard Zinn-style people's history. Lesser-known figures like Kuwasi Balagoon and Grace Lee Boggs get equal treatment alongside the more famous W.E.B. DuBois and Pablo Nerudo. Compiling a radical life into two-three paragraphs is no mean feat, and the entries here do justice to their subjects.

The illustrations are black and white with greytones, and they match the excellence of the portraits. I preferred the illustrated art over the computer-and-copier-manipulated but taste is relative. I do want to compliment Favianna Rodriguez, Alec Icky Dunn, Colin Matthes and Mary Tremonte for their striking pieces. The supplementary materials come through as well. The index is useful and the bibliography (which they label "resources") should point you towards independent research. Thankfully, Microcosm did an okay job with the printing. Remember the pixilated horror on Nate Powell's first book?

Initially I missed the bigger, brighter impact of the poster series. Justseeds.org, however, still offers many of these striking pieces of art and I'm glad to see an initial 5,000 print-run of this book. . No price is listed but I'm assuming it's reasonable, and I'm looking forward to future volumes.

—Travis Fristoe

Cheetah Chrome: A Dead Boys Tale From the Frontline of Punk Rock
by Cheetah Chrome
368 pages • $24
Voyageur Press

In addition to this book, Cheetah Chrome has also written some of the earliest songs to be called "punk," some eventually covered by the likes of Guns n' Roses and the Beastie Boys. "Sonic Reducer" shows up in most karaoke songbooks. *Young, Loud and Snotty* is as much a way a life for punks today as it is a Dead Boys record title from 1977. Cheetah has partied like (and with) Keith Richards and is still around to tell his story, which he does in this book.

Cheetah Chrome grew up—cred killer alert—Eugene O'Connor, an Irish kid living in the projects in Cleveland. He took quickly to civil dissonance and by the time he was old enough to play in a band he was well-groomed to carry the torch of the new breed of loud, rebellious, destructive rock'n'roll—punk rock. He comes into the fray at a time after the Rolling Stones made their mark on pop/youth music but before the Sex Pistols made a political statement out of it. The spirit of violence and destruction is there, but the PC rhetoric and DIY ethics have yet to become staples of the genre. For example, his band(s) will physically fight their way to liberation and the freedom to play as loud and offensively as possible, but they simultaneously work towards "getting signed" by a major record label; they will run with the fringes of society, with whom they best belong, but they will haul out their nazi flag just for a laugh.

So Cheetah and the Dead Boys forged a path of sex, drugs and rock'n'roll across the American musical landscape deeper and more debauched than any of their predecessors. This book follows the typical *Behind The Music* story arch: band forms, band works hard, band acts stupid, band gets popular, band gets laid, band gets too popular, band breaks up, band members become drug addicts, someone dies.

Cheetah somehow does not die, but in fact lives through some pretty incredible and uncomfortable (and usually self-inflicted) circumstances. His time spent drifting around New York's Bowery neighborhood, weaving in and out of the lives of Nico, Iggy Pop, John Belushi, and Sid and Nancy to name a few, reads like a seedy Martin Scorsese script from the same era. Drugs, violence, crime, murder—they all play a part in the story.

Sometimes (often times, if the book is to be truly representative) Cheetah did despicable things and he makes no effort to draw a likable picture of himself. Most stories end with him destroying something of value and/or trying to drunkenly fight somebody. He admits to stealing and cheating and being an all-around asshole. But the remorse and compassion that routinely pops up in the writing betrays his otherwise dickish persona. "To this day I feel like a monster when I think of it, and I cringed at the thought of including it in this book, but I knew I had to if only to remind myself of why I can't drink anymore." The book is written so conversationally one really feels they know who he was, but

more importantly, who he is now.

The 1980 Cheetah Chrome begs to be beaten with a pool cue, but the 2011 Cheetah Chrome begs, and deserves, to be heard.

—craigums

Excessive Force: Police Everywhere, Justice Nowhere
Edited by Edd Baldry
144 pages • £7
Last Hours
www.lasthours.org/uk

I was beginning to wonder if *MRR* was ever going to send me a graphic novel that was decisively punk, and it finally happened. Nothing brings out the disillusionment and anger that fuels young punks like some police brutality (like every folk singer needs a song against war, every punk band needs a song against the cops). *Excessive Force* is the visual mixtape of seventeen different artists blasting out their best "eff the cops" ballads in their own distinct styles.

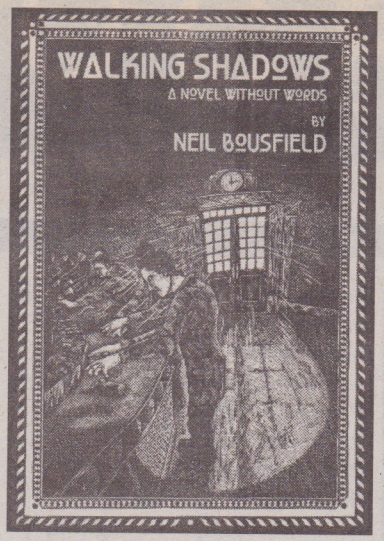
Excessive Force is illustrated in all black and white panel comics with each artist telling their story of state abuse, in their own style. The stories, however, are explosively colorful. Ranging from biographical accounts of witnessing a murder at a political demonstration to imaginary, yet viable, scenarios of police harassment and never shying away from blatant political propaganda. Every author digs deep into their anti-authoritarian craft bag to paint the most brutal picture of state authority possible. This is the kind of graphic novel you would expect to find on the shelf at every anarcho-bookstore/zine library/infoshop across the globe. It is dense with political, preachy messages that will definitely appeal to the "revolutionary" crowd who have already committed to the idea that society has no room for the State and it's enforcers.

Despite the energy pumped into this book, I often felt bored with the comics. Having spent a decade in action packed political activism I am impatient with the rehashing of tales from demos and exaggerated tales of fascist cops vs. altruistic activists. The stories typically relied on cliché "cops are bad" storylines and "cops like donuts" jokes, but there were exceptions to the rule. Ken Dahl's comic "How to Steel the Food You Deserve" took the "cops are mean" narrative and wove it into personal frustrations that many poor/working Americans could relate to. He built a story of a man trying to beat the system by shoplifting from a yuppie health food chain only to find himself arrested and being man handled by an uncaring system. His jokes are original, the story is interesting and he is talented as a comic artist.

The best comic of all, in my burnout opinion, is Paul Stapelton's comic "Not all Bastards are Coppers." If there's one recurring tale that never gets old to me it's the story of the overly political anarchist collective full of all the authorities on anti-authoritarianism. Whether you're a know-it-all politico, one of the many post-know-it-all politicos or someone smart enough to just stay out of that mess, everyone can probably relate to this gem of a comic. I would go into more detail but Stapelton's comic is best seen through your own eyes. I would read this book for it alone.

If you're interested in an agitational piece of comic propaganda, looking to get fired up against the system or in need of some illustrated "riot porn" then *Excessive Force* is where you want to direct your post-holiday money this month. If it matters to you, the profits from *Excessive Force* will go to support a couple police surveillance groups (FIT Watch and Legal Defense and Monitoring).

—Lowell Fletcher



Walking Shadows: A Novel Without Words
Neil Bousfield
224 pages • $19.95
Manic D Press
PO Box 410804
San Francisco, CA 94141
www.manicdpress.com

Walking Shadows is a stunning-looking novel that contains no dialog and relies on stark, woodcut-style engravings to tell the story and illustrate the characters. Its simultaneous success and failure stems from its unique format.

First, the success: planned and then engraved over a two and a half year period, the book's art leaps off of the page. Black and white, it's in the style of a woodcut but actually engraved, instead of gouged like a traditional woodcut. This change in technique allows for a slightly more detailed image while keeping the atmospheric, emotional power of a woodcut. (Think of Edward Munch's painting "The Scream" as an example).

Partly through Bousfield's personal style and partly through the inherent structure of woodcut art, the images often seem like they're rushing around, like a train. One pair of images of a schoolroom even has the narrow appearance of a rail car with an arresting landscape outside of the windows that only line one side of the room. The shading and detail of the images can often also be interpreted as motion lines, adding to the characters' tragic frenzy as they tumble through what seems like an unstoppable ride of back-breaking jobs, mounting bills, and substance abuse.

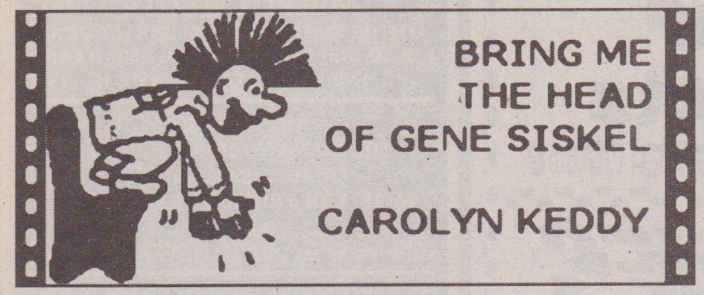
The limitations of the woodcut style—one color, bold lines—unfortunately detracts from the plot. Bousfield chooses to make his main characters look very similar, and leaves it to the reader to discern tiny details in each woodcut to distinguish, for instance, one brother from the other. It took a second reading for me to figure out the fate of each brother—the first time around I confused their storylines. At other key points in the plot, it is unclear who is who. This is especially true when the cyclical nature of crushing poverty comes into play, and characters begin to repeat actions of their predecessors.

These limitations also inhibit any real character development—though to be fair I can't think of a way that a wordless, primitively illustrated novel could provide fully-formed fictional characters in the way that a well-written novel can. Still, the book is the page-count of a standard novel and the author/artist undertandably demands our close attention to his story. Perhaps there's a way to re-imagine the woodcut novel as a wordless yet fulfilling reading experience, either with fully-formed characters or in a form that makes fully formed characters unnecessary. If Bousfield can figure out a way to reach either of these goals, then he'll have the formula for a truly successful wordless, woodcut novel. Unfortunately, "Walking Shadows" is not that ground-breaking novel, as beautiful and lovingly crafted as its art and storyline is.

The brooding monochromatic art communicates a dark, never-ending grind of poverty, hopelessness, and exploitation: In short, it's a mute, updated version of Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, minus the character development that made that classic sing.

—Jesse Luscious

MOVIES



As the President of the Punk Rock Film Critics Association™, it is that time of the year when I release our list of best films of 2010 basically because everybody else is doing it. I hate to be excluded from list making. Elsewhere in this issue of *Maximum Rocknroll* the shitworkers are listing their favorite records of 2010, so why not join in on the fun?

First I'd like to start off with a New Year's resolution for all documentary filmmakers. No more shots of interviewees driving cars. I am not sure when this became the go-to shot, but it needs to stop. I don't care if your subject is a car driver. Resist the urge.

Here is the list of the Punk Rock Film Critics Association™ best films of 2010:

Oil City Confidential

The documentary of Dr. Feelgood, a band that *MRR* coordinator Layla affectionately refers to as Dad Rock. Dr. Feelgood was a British pub rock band from Canvey Island. Director Julien Temple does a great job in setting the band up as the precursor to punk. Everyone from Joe Strummer to Princess Diana was a fan. Seeing the amazing footage of Dr. Feelgood playing live it is easy to see why. The film covers their humble beginnings as children playing in jug bands to tourists through their popular years to the band's demise. Temple slows **Oil City Confidential** down with too many referential old film clips. Fortunately the story of the band is compelling enough to get past these speed bumps. (www.oilcityconfidential.co.uk)

Exit Through The Gift Shop

A film that is half a documentary on graffiti artists and half the story of the meteoric rise of failed documentarian, yet successful street artist, Mr. Brainwash. **Exit Through The Gift Shop** shows amazing footage of street artists at work including the how-did-he-get-away-with-it Banksy installation of a blow up prisoner of war at Disneyland. While at the same time posing the question of whether all this art world interest in street artists is really just terribly misguided as Mr. Brainwash crashes on the LA art scene. As Banksy's former art dealer Steve Lazarides comments "I don't know who the joke is on, really. I don't even know if there is a joke." (www.banksyfilm.com)

La Peste Live Boston 1979

La Peste are one of my favorite bands despite having only released one 7" record during their time together. The release of this DVD is the closest I ever got to see them live. Eight songs shot on black and white video at the Paradise Lounge in Boston, MA. The sound appears to be synced from another show, but the match is so well done it is almost flawless. The crowd loves La Peste and is dancing crazily. I wish I was there, but I was way underage at the time. (www.kinodv.net)

La Brune et Moi

This DVD release celebrates the 30th anniversary of this French punk film. An attractive female punk wants to be a star and an infatuated business agrees to help her. The flimsy story is basically an excuse to showcase some French bands of the time. That is the reason to watch **La Brune et Moi**. Performances here include the Dogs, Les Privés, the Questions, Edith Nylon, Astroflash, Marquis de Sade and Go-Go Pigalles. There is a wide range of musical styles represented. It's a fascinating glance at punk's past. (www.lechatquifume.com)

(The Complete) Metropolis

The amazing story of how two Argentine film lovers Paula Félix-Didier and Fernando Peña discovered an original 150 minute print (thought to be lost forever) of Fritz Lang's **Metropolis** in the archive of the Museo del Cine further enhances the beauty of this film. The reintegrated scenes come from a 16mm print so they stand out from the rest of the restored 35mm print. While this may be distracting for those seeing the film for the first time, it also allows the viewer to appreciate what was lost and regained through this discovery. **Metropolis** is the story of a brilliant inventor who causes a worker rebellion against the leader of Metropolis. Why? The oldest story in the book, the leader stole the inventor's girlfriend. Yet, it is the beauty of the drudgery of work and the rebellious chaos that make this film unforgettable. Now available on DVD.

Remembering Playland On The Beach

This is a short documentary of San Francisco amusement park Playland At The Beach which operated from 1923 to 1972. The film combines footage and photographs of the park with remembrances of people who worked at and enjoyed the park during its existence. Through this film the filmmakers provide an interesting glimpse into the history of San Francisco. (www.garfieldlandproductions.com)

The Agony and The Ecstasy Of Phil Spector

Phil Spector is a hard guy to like, but the frankness and blunt conceit of his interview make **The Agony and The Ecstasy Of Phil Spector** a compelling watch. The interview was conducted between the two trials of the 2003 murder of actress Lana Clarkson. The first ended in a mistrial and the second convicted Spector of the murder. It is interspersed with footage of Spector's murder trial as well as music clips accompanied by the filmmaker's commentary on the music. Director Vikram Jayanti is obviously trying to make the case that Spector's personality not his guilt was the reason he was convicted. After watching the film I'd have to agree. It is worth watching for Spector's reasoning behind his famous hairdo alone.

Onward to 2011…As you know I am a supporter of every scene documenting itself. As the world gets smaller and more homogenized, I enjoy seeing our differences as well as our similarities. **Bloodied But Unbowed** tells the story of the early Vancouver punk scene. It focuses on DOA and the Subhumans as the hub of the scene, but also veers off into Pointed Sticks, Young Canadians, K-Tels, Active Dog and many of the other bands that contributed to the uniqueness of Vancouver's punk music. It is a great document of early punk.

Bloodied But Unbowed will be making its San Francisco debut on Friday, February 11 at the Roxie Theater, 3117 16th Street. Be there. (www.thepunkmovie.com)

Not film related, but still important. At 10am on Tuesday, January 18 the community radio station I volunteer at KUSF 90.3fm San Francisco was suddenly shutdown as the University of San Francisco announced it had sold the broadcast license. The deal happened behind closed doors without any involvement of the station's volunteer staff and two commercial stations will end up benefiting from the sale. KUSF needs the community's help to stop the sale. Please visit www.savekusf.org to learn more and give your support.

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com

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(GB) Graham Booth
(JU) Justin Briggs
(TB) Tim Brooks
(DB) Dan Butler
(WN) Robert Collins
(HD) Helen Degenerate
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(AU) Andrew Underwood
(VX) XYosefX

ADD/C – "Busy Days" LP

This record came out at the tail end of 2010 and made it onto my top ten list of the year, so you already know that I love it. *Busy Days* is everything I've ever wanted out of Chattanooga, Tennessee's ADD/C in their ten (give or take) years of existence. Even though I loved every second of their last LP, I felt that it suffered at times from laziness and not giving a fuck. There are some glaring wrong notes and bad takes on that record. I know that they recorded it at home and could've fixed it, but they didn't. We're in the present now and this LP is flawless, full of songs that are thoughtful, sincere, depressing and make me want to flail myself around a room full of punks. I've never been able to compare ADD/C to any other bands besides themselves, which is fucking awesome. They fall into that gray area (not unlike the BANANAS) where they take the basic elements of jangly punk and filter it through their own region, their own style, and mirror what is going on in their own community while eschewing corporate influence and creeping monoculture. The result is a damn fine record that is less like another LP to add to the heap, but more like a triumph for the punks (the jangly pop ones, anyway). This are songs for the End Times with lyrics like "Where are we gonna sleep? What are we gonna eat? / When all the cars are just useless metal heaps?" and "I'll never get to Heaven because I don't believe there is one." I could go on for days. The record comes with a beautiful full-sized zine/lyric booklet drawn by Heather Lacey and Billy Joe Johnson. The cover art is the most beautiful I've seen in years and if bands are not banging down Yuri's (the artist) door in France and begging her to draw anything for their goddamn pitiful band, this world is fucked. (GH)
(Mauled by Tigers / Plan-It-X South)

ANAL CUNT – "Fuckin' A" CD

For what it's worth, I have to admit that I actually respect AC's place in the history of noise-core and I have been known to rock *Everyone Should Be Killed* and even *40 More Reasons to Hate Us* on occasion, but I can't imagine anyone actually wants to listen to an entire CD of the band doing primitive cock rock in the style of MOTLEY CRÜE. This is worthless, and yes, I realize that's probably the "joke" but seriously… fuck this shit. So yeah, go ahead and crow about how the "PC assholes" at *MRR* gave you a bad review, but it's not even about the (shitty) lyrics, it's about the fact that the music sucks ass. This record isn't even offensive—it's just boring. (AU)
(Patac)

ARTS – "Vault of Heaven" LP

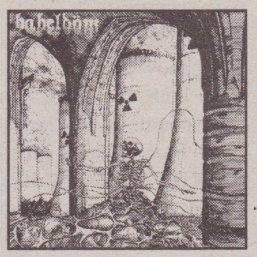
ARTS, for those of you who don't know, is one of several excursions into black metal by Mark McCoy, best known for running the Youth Attack label and helming hardcore bands like CHARLES BRONSON, DAS OATH, FAILURES, etc. This album does not contain punk music. Although there are some punkish influences present, this is very lo-fi, noisy black metal. I've really enjoyed some of Mark's black-metal-related output: the ANCESTORS 7" and LP are both excellent, and the DEVIL'S DUNG demo he and Dominick Fernow recorded was quite good. This LP is more of a mixed bag, though. Some of the riffs are excellent, and at times a properly sinister and threatening atmosphere is evoked, but not all of the songs are solid, particularly on the A-side. The B-side is stronger, with violin on the opening track that is genuinely pained-sounding, but the closing noise/ambient track is honestly pretty weak. I can't help to compare this to his stronger work, and I find it wanting. (VX)
(Youth Attack)

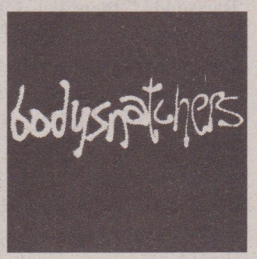
BABELDÖM – "Hell's Gate" EP

In the marathon world of Japanese live shows, five or six bands play with miniscule breaks to change the guitars and pedals out before continuing the assault of high energy, rapid-fire hardcore. Often you've never heard of these bands, but they step up to the plate and deliver standard-issue, titanic blasts of hardcore one after the next. With a quick glance, I'd be apt to throw BABELDÖM into that pile of respected footsoldiers like ABRAHAM CROSS, CROCODILE SKINK, HUMPTY DUMPTY, etc.—but repeat listens propel this to distinction. There're odd, strange voiceovers, great eruptions of out of the standard frame of Japanese hardcore into blastbeats reminiscent of SHIKABANE, urgent vocals and searing guitar parts, making for a inventive twists of the formula and a good, pounding debut EP of metallic rage. Looking forward to where this band evolves. Cool! (KS)
(Narm)

BACKSLIDER – "Harsh Negativity" EP

I liked the previous tracks I heard from this band so was excited to review this 7". BACKSLIDER is a two-person powerviolence band from Philly that mixes in a few other sounds. Imagine a combination of LACK OF INTEREST and GODSTOMPER. Quick, short tracks that somehow find a way to twist and turn in their short length. This is one of my





favorite powerviolence records in a while. (MH)
(Blastcat / To Live a Lie)

BODYSNATCHERS – "Frantic" EP

Awww yeah! One of the first couple '70s Aussie punk reissues to trickle in from Austin's 540 Records! Rabid KBD collectros will already be aware of the Savage/Shake Records empire based in Brisbane in the late '70s/early '80s. With a tiny roster of incestuous friend bands and a brief window for releasing vinyl, it's mindboggling the amount of hits they packed into roughly ten singles, rivaling worldwide contemporaries such as LA's Dangerhouse Records like few others. BODYSNATCHERS were a side-project of JUST URBAIN's McLeod brothers teamed up with a high school buddy and a drum machine, and this single was recorded along with two other EPs from JUST URBAIN and a YOUNG IDENTITIES in a mythical eight-hour recording session. BODYSNATCHERS have long sat in the shadow of their forebears, which is a shame since both tracks are menacing, rough punkers with infectious new wave trash vox long before "new wave" was a dirty word. I see YOUNG IDENTITIES' second EP is around here also, but honestly, you should probably just buy all the 45s in the series (if you can still find them!). (GB)
(540)

THE BOYS CLUB – "Every Good Boy Does Fine" EP

Damn. This is some strange shit! My initial reaction was that this was pretty catchy and poppy to be filed under the genre power pop/punk, but... Once you get past the first song, there are a bunch of broader influences, some subtle and some that hit you like a ton of bricks! On the second song "Barracuda," there is a full-on a cappella breakdown towards the end of the song!? Strange indeed, but oddly enough it works!! The first song on the B-side continues with a kind of '50s doo-wop style followed by a more straightforward song that sounds like it could be an indie rock hit that you might hear on the radio?? The BOYS CLUB is an odd lot, but in the end they have put together a pretty interesting EP... (ML)
(Hang Up)

BRAIN FLANNEL – "Restraining Order" EP

The title track of this release is an energetic grungy thing and was recorded beautifully, but the lyrics are too obvious to make the track compelling. Fortunately, the B-side is a bit more interesting. BRAIN FLANNEL is definitely good rock'n'roll songwriters. Maybe a poetry workshop would help to complete the package? (HD)
(Static Shock)

BRAINWASHED YOUTH – "The Trilogy" EP

This is one of those situations where you already know if you need this or not. A thuggish, multi-accented modern interpretation of the PSYCHO SIN *You Axed For It* EP. If you are already a fan of the work of CIDER, the INMATES and the H-100S, I imagine this 7" is ensconced firmly in your record collection, thus my review of it is irrelevant. So be it. There are references to the POLICE, shit, parents, "English Cuntry Gardens" and a fuck yuz to sieg heiling faggots. Or maybe it's exhorting faggots to sieg heil? Either way, open to interpretation. (LG)
(Richie)

BRIMSTONE HOWL / HELL SHOVEL – split EP

The BRIMSTONE HOWL plays it dirty. Dirty vocals, dirty guitar and a nicer layer of dirt in the production. Garage that straddles that line between psych and R&B, taking a huge leaf out of those classic *Nuggets* or *Pebbles* comps. The ELECTRIC PRUNES, CHOCOLATE WATCH BAND and some straight-up rudimentary ROLLING STONES comes to mind. Raw without being basic, with just that right amount of melody to keep it in the shower-humming zone. (SD)
(Certified PR)

BRUTAL KNIGHTS – "Blown 2 Completion" LP

Definitely the best record this band has done, though pretty similar to the others that I've heard. This strikes me as hardcore for (and probably by) grownups who work 40 hours a week, have bills to pay and enjoy the dumb teenage hardcore/punk songs that come from their excellent record collections, except that after dealing with adult responsibilities for long enough, songs about eating buffalo wings, taking naps, hating chores and the absurdity of the products sold through the *SkyMall* catalog all seem more relevant than anything about smashing the state or skipping school or whatever. The song "Summertime Coffee" takes a jab at iced coffee as a "stuff white people like" sort of drink, incorporating a fuzzed-out drum machine and a somewhat industrial rhythm, possibly to hit the point home musically. This band delivered both times I saw them live, but I really feel like a drunken basement show would be the way to go with them. (DG)
(Deranged)

CELLMATES – "Shoulda Kept That Quarter" EP

This slab of wax smacks of classic '80s hardcore punk as the term was first used. Not the chugging NYC style that has come to dominate the genre, but more along the lines of the SIMPLETONES or CIRCLE JERKS. All in all, this is a good, solid EP if you're into the aforementioned bands. I imagine that these guys would probably rip it up live and be a fun band to see. (ML)
(Wall Ride)

CHARLIE AND THE SKUNKS – "Take an Ice Cream Scoop Out of My Brain" EP

Four songs from this four-piece from Bloomington, Indiana. CHARLIE AND THE SKUNKS is really peppy, really poppy, somewhat punk, kind of garagy. Simple guitar riffs mostly drowned out by keyboard squeaks and panicky vocals. They sure seem like they are having a good time, and their positive attitude certainly can be contagious. (CK)
(Eradicator)

CHEIFS – "Holly-West Crisis" LP

I bought my first *Killed by Death* comp in 2003, I think. Yeah, I know, I know—late-pass over here—but it was volume two, which has the CHEIFS' tune "Blues" on it along side the FREEZE, FREESTONE, and the EAT, and that song stuck with me like glue. A couple years later I nabbed an earlier version of this here *Holly-West Crisis* LP and since then have spun this record weekly. To this day I still can't believe how good this band was. Why aren't they a gateway punk band for the kiddies like their locale-mates BAD RELIGION or DESCENDENTS? I guess the fact that in their time only seven of these thirteen tracks saw the light of day on one 7" and a couple comps could have something to do with it, but my use of BAD RELIGION and DESCENDENTS was not without intent and like those two bands the CHEIFS played with pop sensibilities as much as they did the snot and the trash to craft absolutely perfect catchy and nasty punk tunes. My favorite on here is now apparently called "Karen Walsh" but was called "Karen Walach" on the last version of this collection, *but* since they talk about daytime [TV], I think it is *supposed* to be "Karen Wolek," who was Judith Light's (*Whose the Boss*'s Angela Bower) character on *One Life to Live* at the time. I love the way the chorus is driven by meandering tom rolls. So, yeah, this record is an absolute essential listening for fans of punk, and aside from weird missteps that I always thought I was imagining but are now confirmed with two songs (sorta) repeating in a row twice, this is a *perfect* record. (JU)
(Dr. Strange)

CHEST PAIN – "Northcoast Wizard Violence" EP

Cover sucks, vocals suck, lyrics suck, the music is OK. Modern powerviolence-style shit I guess, along with some very strange melodic vocal lines thrown in on two of the tracks. I don't know if the singer just has a weak-ass voice or if he sounds intentionally winded, but it is seriously awful. I actually hate this record, I think. I'm done with this shit—every record I hear in this style lately is worse than the one before it. I'm going to listen to the new LOW THREAT PROFILE again; I suggest these guys do the same. (AH)
(Depleted Resource)

CHINA SHOP BULL – "Rave to the Grave" CD

A peculiarly British release. Only the Brits seem to want to marry the likes of hip-hop, techno, metal and punk, and manage to come up with a hybrid that doesn't sound completely horrendous. Like PITCHSHIFTER and the BLAGGERS ITA that came before, they do—blessedly—lay out some excellent leftist/class-conscious lyrics over the noise. Can't say the music is my cup of tea at all, but the attitude, spirit and suss brimmeth over. (RK)
(self-released)

CIGARETTE CROSSFIRE / SHATTERHAND – split EP

One song each here from two European bands. SHATTERHAND is British and play a heavily political song in the vein of LEFTOVER CRACK. It's kind of dirty and the lyrics are more spit out than sung. There are harmonizing vocals during the chorus that sends it off balance, but other than that it sounds cool. CIGARETTE CROSSFIRE is from Finland and they do a more melodic hardcore thing. Theirs is also a very political song, about war and the world's ambivalence to it. Check it out. (FS)
(Unsane Asylum)

CIRCLE X – "Tender" 12"

Official reissue of this crushing post-punk/no wave 12" from 1979. CIRCLE X was comprised of transplants from Louisville, KY, who'd trekked first to New York City and then on to Dijon, France. The four-song record sounds at times like NO TREND, SPIKE IN VAIN or even early SWANS—but it predates those bands by at least a couple years. FLIPPER would be another reference point, but CIRCLE X is too humorless, too aggro to warrant a real comparison. This is bleak, powerful stuff... Highly recommended (despite the damn cover art being pixilated). (CS)
(Insolito)

CLOSET FAIRIES – "Popular Science/Painted in a Corner"

This is yet another solid release from Shock to the System. Here we get the last two songs of endearingly lo-fi garage punk from this band comprised of members of WITCHES WITH DICKS and MAINE COONS. The title track bears striking similarity to the UNDERTONES' *Teenage Kicks*, but is original enough that you'd be a fool to call it a rip-off. The B-side is bouncy, mid-tempo and catchy as all get-out. You'd better act fast on this one—apparently the pressing plant destroyed one of the plates, hence this is a one-time-only pressing. (BD)
(Shock to the System)

COCK SPARRER – "Essentials" box set

COCK SPARRER is one of the longest-running punk bands in the game, and on the two occasions I saw them, they proved that they're also one of the best and most downright inspirational—something most bands half their age fail to do with as much honesty and conviction. This package, however, is so comically massive that I don't even know where to start. Here's an abridged version of the contents: the *Best Seat in the House* book by drummer Steve Bruce, a replica poster from their 1978 tour, two 7"s, a 10" picture disc, and ten (yes, *ten*) LPs, including a reissue of the classic *Shock Troops*, the newer ones, and a slew of live records and outtakes collections. The folks at Pirates Press are known for their glossy and extravagant reissues, picture discs, and other novelties, but this is over the top even by their standards. If you're a newcomer to COCK SPARRER, this is absolutely not the place to start (I suggest *Shock Troops* and the *Decca Years* collection). If you're a longtime fan, the best item here is probably the book, which includes a ton of rare photos, fliers and stories all the way from the super-early days when they hung around with the SMALL FACES to the worldwide tours of the last two decades. But it would be a serious stretch to say that this package is essential. Hell, at $350 each, this really isn't for anyone other than bona-fide COCK SPARRER freaks. (JH)
(Pirates Press)

COMA REGALIA / QUANTIS – split EP

Not a lot of information about the bands is included, but the hand-screened cover is quite nice; it's not unlike many of those Gravity Records/screamo bands of the '90s. Which brings us to the music—did I mention screamo? COMA REGALIA will make you think of ORCHID. Nothing groundbreaking, but the tunes certainly have plenty of energy and passion and some good dynamics. I think QUANTIS are from Malaysia. Very much in a similar vein but the recording is much slicker and the music a bit more math-y, with the quiet/loud thing going on at times. I found some of the percussive elements a little distracting, but otherwise a fine listen. (MD)
(Middle Man)

COME AND TAKE IT – "Forget It?" EP

This band plays a dark and emotional brand of pop-punk. There appears to be a heavy JAWBREAKER influence, but I can hear some FIFTEEN in there, too. The songs are written in a very bleak way and it seems as though the contents weigh on the singer heavily. It's not emo-pop-punk, but it's close. Three originals and a BORN AGAINST cover. (FS)
(Twistworthy)

COME WIND – "Wanderer O Wanderer" CD

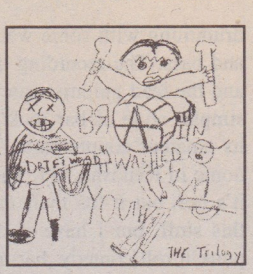
Back in the days when vinyl ruled, I'm guessing this would have been a mini-LP. Or a 12" EP. Six long songs, clocking in at over 25 minutes. Actually, so who knows, mebbe it is a real full-length (certainly by punk standards). Unfortunately, back in the day, this wouldn't have been called punk by any stretch of the imagination, despite punk being a very broad church three decades ago. The singer really wants to be Bono, and the suitably anguished twin guitar noodlings don't augment tormented wordiness about relationships, breaking backs, being unfaithful and whatnot. The artwork is pretty cool, though unrelated, as far as I can tell, to the overblown, overwrought indie rock that lies within. (RK)
(No label info anywhere to be found, which is perhaps just as well)

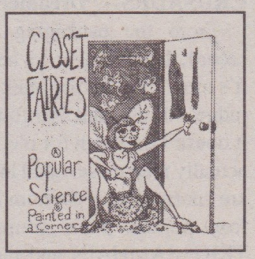
CRIATURAS – "Arañas en el Corazon" EP

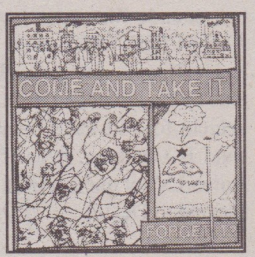
CRIATURAS manages to take MOTÖRHEAD and RUDIMENTARY PENI and make it sound like a supercharged Spanish goth attack. The female vocals are dead on NENA, shrill and up front in the mix, doing battle with space-age guitars that scream Japanese hardcore even though the rest of the music comes from miles away. This is dark and fierce, definitely a record that I just want to listen to over and over... Simply put: this is the best. (WN)
(Lengua Armada)

CROSSTOPS – "The Ego That Ate the World" LP

This is...something else. I didn't know that a band from San Francisco would know what crosstops are, but I stand corrected and I can see this band popping lots of them with their cheap beer while huffing Freon. It's like TENACIOUS D, REVEREND HORTON HEAT and NASHVILLE PUSSY, and with titles like "Somebody Came in Grandma's Hair" you can guess there are plenty of hi-jinx. Self-described as "punk rock country-tinged acidized rock metal jazz comedy," it's no surprise that less than half of this record is reviewable. There are spooky keyboards, twangy guitars and harmonica all adding up to a good amount of country tracks, a doo-wop song and a lounge ditty called "Wine and Dine Your Vagine" (which admittedly made me laugh some). Otherwise, the songs are rock'n'roll with basic







drumming with some wanky moments on guitar and bass. The recording quality is very polished and the lead guitarist can play, which makes this simpler style of bar rock/punk'n'roll better than its amateur counterparts. This band would be at home in Kenosha, WI. Their lyrics? Well, poetry it's not, but it fits their music style. I don't like this stuff, but I have to admit, in this genre of punk'n'roll/comedy bar rock, it's on top. The cover sports a crucified Jesus with a giant dong and some crazy shit going on with angels and Obama. The end of the record has Satan farting on it for about a minute. (MB)
(Rockstar)

CROWD CONTROL – "Terror Cycle" EP

I previously had only known this Irish hardcore unit from their split with the UK's MOB RULES (amazing fukking band), but apparently they've put out an LP at some point as well—if anyone out there wants to help me find a copy, contact me via *MRR*, because this 7" destroys. Incredibly heavy and brutal hardcore, mixing blastbeats with breakdowns—I could just as easily see powerviolence nerds and INTEGRITY fans going off to this live. The production is incredibly deep and bass-heavy, almost more suited to a sludge record, but it works well. It sounds like this was recorded at two different sessions, because the three originals on the A-side aren't *quite* as heavy as the one original and two covers (BASTARD and CITIZENS ARREST) on side B. Mandatory listening. (VX)
(Disposable Culture)

CRUSADES – "Dreamers" EP

From the packaging and imagery on this record, I pictured it to be a hardcore band, but it's more like driving punk. Books. Covers. Don't judge. All that shit. All four songs are decent, but it doesn't do much for me. In their promo sheet (I actually read these…and laugh), they say that they are "narrowing a plethora of influences—ranging from popular punk groups such as ALKALINE TRIO, SAMHAIN and the DAMNED … while incorporating the dark melodies of black metal." I fail to see any metal influence whatsoever. It just sounds like your basic pop-punk, such as ALKALINE TRIO, with darker subject matter and religious imagery. The vaguely religious tone of the lyrics and their talk of "needing a new vehicle for old ideas" make me question if this band is Christian, even if the insert features an Anton LaVey quote. (GH)
(Scared to Death)

CUSTODY BATTLE – 10"

This album rules. It's a really weird mix of styles going on here. Going to make it real hard to describe this to ya'll. It feels like the guitar player wrote a bunch of garage songs that boarder surfy at times, but when the whole band got together all the songs went into a way more punk direction. As a group they play really manic and fast songs with a singer that delivers his vocals like FILTH. But it's all with garage rock undertones. Cool stuff. (FS)
(self-released)

DARGE – "Odio Brasil Tour 2010" DVD

Gifu, Japan's DARGE are comprised of two Japanese guys and a Brazillian ex-pat, and in 2010 found themselves touring eight cities of Brazil. There are fourteen live recordings from shows of their primitive metal-punk bashing, which flip-flops in the intersection of both Brazilian and Japanese hardcore. Gruff vocals? Harsh metal riffage? Super quick, high-energy hardcore? Those influences could come from either scene, though probably settles closer here to SDS than RDP. The recording is largely single-camera, with varying quality as it shakes around the show before settling to record the band, but it won't put you off from enjoying the music, and you get a good impression of the band's pounding and quick riffage. What makes this a really great DVD, however, is the large amount of incidental moments from the tour. Some of the scenery of Brazil, from the beaches, driving around the cities, to people milling sugarcane—it's as much a travelogue as it is a document of the band's live performances. Like any tour, there's also footage of the random, kind and incidental people who raise a beer or two with DARGE, and they also include snippets of 28 different bands they played with. NTSC, 52 minutes plus bonus footage! A great expression of international punk cooperation and its window of possibilities—cool. (KS)
(MCR Company)

DARK RIDES – "Opponent" EP

Quickly overcoming my slight confusion courtesy of some squeaky vocals that whichever way you play them initially sound like they're on the wrong speed, this rapidly heats up into a totally tight, tuneful explosion of THIS-IS-MY-FIST!-style awesome in my ears, brah! Riddled with HIDDEN SPOTS riffs (unsurprisingly as these bands share members), and the bluesy rocking backbone of FUTURE VIRGINS, this is six tracks of total Chattanooga yay. Even those vocals that I didn't quite get at first, by the end of the record, I'm all up in! Definitely worth checking out—you even get a little sticker of a spongy black bat! (GG)
(Do Ya Hear We)

DEAD GHOSTS – LP

I'm hit or miss with the new wave of shoegaze. While I can dig the reverb and shimmer, fuckers need *songs*, y'know? Hooks 'n' shit. This DEAD GHOSTS LP harnesses an almost rockabilly sound in their lo-fi, and mix it up with OH SEES, TY SEGALL distorto-pop hooks. There's elements of JESUS AND MARY CHAIN, doo-wop, rockabilly and country all melded together seamlessly into a riveting disc. All those Brooklyn nerds trying to pull this shit off should look to these Canucks for tips. It also reminded me of the Midwest band the YOLKS, who also poached the '50s vibes. It's January, but I think this will be my summer LP. Boss sounds for sure. (TB)
(Florida's Dying)

DEAD UNCLES – "Flatlining" EP

This formula is a little played out to my ears. Not exactly what I'd call bad, but it sounds like I've heard it before. I'm sure due to the greatness and prominence of DILLINGER FOUR within the past ten years; as a result, there will be a whole frigging new generation's worth of bands emerging that emulate this full-bodied and gutsy, bass-driven punk rock sound. Though unfortunately, not all of them will be able to deliver it as effectively. (GG)
(Shock to the System)

DEATH DEALERS – "Files of Atrocity" CD

Awesome!!! Features Phil Vane and Dean Jones of EXTREME NOISE TERROR on vocals, as well as members of RAW NOISE and the longstanding drummer of ANTI-CIMEX. This is a return to form that's more successful than 2008's EXTREME NOISE TERROR comeback record, which hollowed out the guitar sound in favor of highlighting the rapid fire drumming and harsh vocals. Here the approach is much more brutal (losing the samples that made the EXTREME NOISE TERROR record seem very dated), and in its simplicity somehow more current. *Files of Atrocity* relies on slower, simplistic, crushing ANTI-CIMEX-styled riffs that are given room to breathe and fully sink in, as the two masters of deconstructing language to a series of grunts, growls and howls gnarl vocal chords atop the pounding hardcore. Excellent recording for this type of music—just full enough but also just loose enough—with squeals of feedback and pummeling D-beat. Lyrics attack drudgery of jobs you hate, US foreign policy, inequality and racism! Killer! *Killer!!!!* (KS)
(Terrorotten)

DESPERATE HOURS – "The Ironies of Life Continue" EP

This sounds like a release from a band in the throes of an identity crisis. Some of it is really aggressive, distorted, basic Scandi-crust (good), but then there are other songs (most notably "Who Are the Bastards") that are done in full-on TRAGEDY-esque epi-crust mode (not so good), and I don't really like how the two sides coexist. The basic stuff is pretty killer and when they're going fast they're doing well, but I feel like the melodic guitar bits kind of meander and don't really do much but cause the songs to lose momentum and direction. The production is kind of muffled and lifeless and that doesn't do them a lot of favors, either. *The Ironies of Life Continue* definitely starts out with the best track but it just kind of piddles out from there. It's not bad, and if you're down with the spiky vest set it's probably worth checking out, but I'm pretty indifferent to this EP. (AU)
(Konton Crasher)

DIALS – "Television Silence/She Said"

Ohhhhhh shit!!!! Best record of the month. Absolute *killllller* choppy late-'70s punk outta Japan… I mean, it's from now, but *sounds* late-

'70s. Like the WASPS or SLAUGHTER AND THE DOGS or some shit. For more recent comparisons you could say the REGISTRATORS, the STAND BY ME or any of the tough skinny-tie bands that Japan shits out. This nears perfection: slurred vocals with mangled English and sharp, loud guitars. Short and to the point. No mess, no fuss. Fantastic!!!!!!! (TB)
(Dialogue)

DISPEPSIAA / VIOLENT GORGE – split EP

Grindcore! OK, a bit of death metal. DISPEPSIAA from Brazil and VIOLENT GORGE from Winnipeg, Canada both grind away. DISPEPSIAA do the death metal/grindcore thing. I didn't hear anything very exciting but it's not bad. VIOLENT GORGE's tracks are raw and a bit lo-fi death metal with goregrind leanings. I'm not sure the vocalist is even trying to sing anything and the heavy use of reverb and scary sound make me think they watch a lot of horror movies. Maybe a lo-fi IMPETIGO? Their tracks made me smile. They didn't include lyrics but by their song titles it seems like they are taking pointers from CARCASS with tracks like "Mephitic Bromhidrosis." Damn, these guttural vocal noises with lots of reverb are great. (MH)
(Bullshit Propaganda)

DO NOT RESUSCITATE – "Tomming" EP

Noisy, chaotic, fucked up hardcore. DO NOT RESUSCITATE captures those going-all-out moments where the sound is standing on the edge of falling apart into chaos. One moment I'm lost in their chaotic energy and then next in awe that the song hasn't collapsed into a mess of noise. It is hardcore (with a small bit of fastcore) but don't expect anything tight, clean or nice. This Australian band put this out themselves and I'm really glad it made its way to me. Listen to this band. (MH)
(self-released)

E.A.T.E.R. – "If Nothing Is Right, Go Left" EP

Clever title. These guys were on the second *Empty Skulls* comp. That's where I've heard them. I remember digging their tracks! Well, they've reformed and recorded this barebones Swedish punk offering that brings bands like ASTA KASK and early AVSKUM to mind. It also just kinda sounds like a modern-day, Swedish Riot City or No Future band. Fortunately these guys have a pretty old-school-sounding production so it doesn't sound like an overproduced version of a historically under-produced genre. Unfortunately, the tunes don't make too much of an impression, at least not on me. The sleeve is a nice gatefold and the art looks pretty nice albeit somewhat generic. Overall I think this is a cool record for avid fans of classic Scandinavian punk! (DB)
(ERNST / Sound Pollution)

END OF POWER – "Shackled to a Corpse" CD

I'm not sure how much attention I would have paid to this lot had I not had they not blown my head off in San Diego a while back. Also not sure how this passed through *MRR* quality control. This shit is metal… Like a psych version of INEPSY or MOTÖRHEAD, but even more metal. It's down-tuned and heavy, yet has a real trippy quality, especially in the solos that sound like the dude from the PINK FAIRIES. Live they were like a super heavy HAWKWIND which they don't so much on disc, but you get the idea. I think this band fuckin' kills and I'm super stoked to hear them again!!! Dig in if you have no fear of the metal!! (TB)
(Livid)

ESTROGEN HIGHS – "Friends & Relatives" LP

I don't know a lot of muddy pop bands coming from New Haven, CT, so it seems these guys are filling a nice gap. "Re-Commencement Speech" swiftly kicks some '80s Flying Nun feelings for those partial to the SNEAKY FEELINGS, the CLEAN, et al. There's a small, introverted and self-contained world of fun shining through much of this LP: "I Am Tradition," "Silly Marvels" and the triumphant "Willie the Inventor" work on building a quaint universe like R. STEVIE MOORE did. Still, the shuffling guitars and lovably sloppy delivery will remind listeners of the carefree coastal vibes from New Zealand, gat-splat-gat snares thumping, jangly electricity and naïve vocals borrow the best from that region and make something neatly their own. A great little gem, hoping to see more. (JS)
(Gramercy)

ESTROGEN HIGHS – "Cycles" 12"

My favorite format: 12-inch EP, 45 RPM, seven songs. Suits my A.D.D. rock'n'roll loving brain perfectly. Lo-fi, pop-hook-heavy garage that could easily nestle up all cozy with JAIL or even a stripped-down version of local posterboys the MANTLES. Ain't no reinventing the wheel with these new schmoos, but that ain't really the point when it comes to the Holy Bible of rock'n'roll. Just pen me a damn good tune (job done) and play those guitars all nice an' dirty with a blatant disrespect for progressive chord changes (job done). I've had too many surprises the last year, none of them much good, so it's great to get a no-punches-pulled, familiar-sounding friend soothing my aching ears. (SD)
(Safety Meetings)

THE EVIL STREAKS – "Go Go to Hell" EP

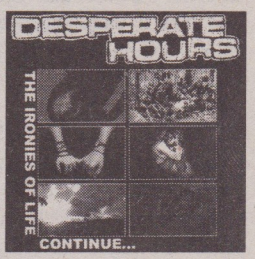
I know this isn't terribly relevant, but if I've said it once, I've said it a hundred times. Small record, big hole—45 RPM. Big record, small hole—33 RPM. With that out of the way, let's get to the record at hand. I don't like it. Even though it's sort of poppy and it's blessed with female vocals, I don't really like it. Musically, it's tight and well put together, but it lacks sincerity. It's got no soul. Sure, she's got a pretty voice, but it seems affected. If you like the mid-tempo, garagey, rockabilly stuff, you might give a shot. (KK)
(Necro-Tone)

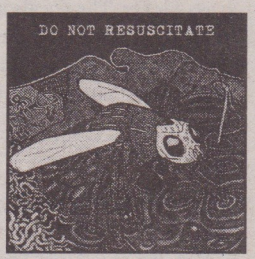
LOS EXPLOSIVOS – "Sonidos Rocanrol" CD

Of course it's garage rock. It's on Get Hip, they're called LOS EXPLOSIVOS, and they're all wearing black and white striped shirts ferchrissakes! Garage rock, yes, but this band should not to be mistaken for some primitive and generic garage crud band (let's face it, there are *a lot* of them!), as they also combine fuzz-heavy, sonic Detroit style rock and roll with a '60s punk stomp. It's like part MC5, part GUITAR WOLF and part early CYNICS, which sounds pretty killer, right? And there aren't any throwaway filler tracks here; the range of approaches makes this a totally listenable full-length. LOS EXPLOSIVOS just might be Mexico's finest export right now. *¡Estupendo!* (BG)
(Get Hip)

FACE THE RAIL – "Fractures" EP

To give an indication of how much I'm digging this band, I went out and tracked down the LP on Tankcrimes within a day of hearing this new EP. Shit, where the hell have I been this whole time and not heard about these cats yet? FACE THE RAIL embodies the mid-'80s DC hardcore sound in a way, like *Joy Ride*-era GOVERNMENT ISSUE and BLACK





MARKET BABY, but they also have a raw sense of melody much like early REASON TO BELIEVE or later-period F.U.'s. The guitar work is jangly and powerful at the same moment, and the touch of harmony never gets in the way of the hardcore spirit behind the songs. This description is hopefully sounding appealing to you because you need to give this one a shot. Don't fuck around and miss out. Killer! (BG)
(Headcount)

FED UP – "Sheer Poetry" CD

One thing you have *got* to give credit to FED UP for is that they are one fucking tight unit! This is razor-sharp NYC hardcore without a doubt. The nice thing about it is that as much as it is definitely "thug-y" sounding, there are still lots of catchy hooks and guitar bits throughout all the chugging stop/start rhythms that it'll hold your attention. With their roots firmly planted in NYHC with influences like WARZONE and AGNOSTIC FRONT, FED UP is not for the faint of heart. Listener beware that there is vulgar language and they'll unapologetically tell you what they think—PC this is not!! (ML)
(United Riot)

FIST CITY – "Hunting You" LP

For the first time in a long while, I am encountering a full-length LP that doesn't become agonizing halfway through the A-side. FIST CITY are large, heavy stones that still bounce to get everywhere they go. The guitar and bass are best friends on this record and their drummer is an ass-kicker. The vocals are sometimes chanting, sometimes whining, sometimes screeching, but always they are thick and layered and sound like a choir. Other than the excessive use of wah, I love this. (HD)
(Dead Beat)

FLYING OVER – "No One Here Gets Out Alive" LP

Now we're talking. The French punks continue to put out great music. This one is straightforward, catchy and has a certain new wave quality to it, though it is mostly old-school punk rock. With the dual male/female vocals, it is just right up my alley. "You wanna sex with me tonight." On red vinyl, this one is worth putting some effort into finding. Highest recommendation. Excellent. Is there another way to say it? (KK)
(Stryckhnine)

THE FUCKING BUCKAROOS / LOS HELLDANDYS – split EP

As with any split release, one usually tends to end up with a favorite side, and in this case, my fave is the FUCKING BUCKAROOS with their almost POGUES-like hillbilly punk sound. The dominant instrument that stands out above the rest is a banjo, which reminds me of something like "The Boys From County Hell" by THE POGUES. So not a bad thing at all! On the other side is LOS HELLDANDYS. Overall it works out pretty well having these two bands on a split as LOS HELLDANDYS play a bit of a rocka/psychobilly style that kind of reminds me of ELVIS HITLER sorta... Although to mix it up a bit, the first song has a guy singing and the second is a girl which changes the overall feel of the songs since the female vocals are a bit more melodic. (ML)
(Fort Faxon)

THE FUCKMES / KOOMA – split EP

Both bands here are from Finland and both are also new to me. The FUCKMES sound like what I imagine BALZAC would if they were more of a street punk band than a MISFITS worship band. They have two songs here. I was hoping "Fascist Cops" was going to be a cover of the KIDS; it's not, but it's pretty catchy nonetheless. KOOMA has a similar but more straightforward punk sound, kind of like LA PLEBE without the horns. Is it just me, or do both of these bands sound Japanese? Give it a listen, see what you think. (BD)
(Mauski / Punk & Pillu)

FUNGI GIRLS – "Owsley Knows/Glare #2"

I can't ever get enough from these three teenagers out of the suburbs of the Lone Star expanse. They pull the best fuzzed-out exploding calm of HENRY'S DRESS and make nothing of the fact that they can shred apart any band brave enough to share the bill (no need to bother qualifying that statement with their age). "Owsley Knows" is quintessential FUNGI, the soft and resolute vocals over distortedly bold pop hooks, rolling along with a groove so solid it makes me wonder if they only spin *Low Rider* comps when they finally have a break in the garage. The B-side "Glare #2" is equally spellbinding, drawing new lines in unexplored bits of sand for all who try and slop up "garage" or reverb-blah-blah or whatever else has been lazily applied to these kids. This single continues the trend of the FUNGUS delivering great tunes time and time again. (JS)
(Group Tightener)

FURIOUS DUDES – "Florida Sucks" CD

Not that I really have much of a frame of reference for this kinda thing, but Florida's FURIOUS DUDES sound to me like hi-energy ANNIHILATION-TIME-style rock but without the element of danger. More of a cartoony vibe, with tracks called "Demonburger" and "Happy Birthday Furious Dudes" and lyrics like "You're gonna need an operation, baby / To get my foot out [of] your ass." They're tight, they're catchy, the recording quality is good (especially the rumbling bass) and the guitar player throws in some cool discordant guitar licks. Too "ballz 2 tha wall" rock for me, but maybe you're less of a square. (CS)
(Livid)

GENTLEMAN JESSE AND HIS MEN – "You've Got the Wrong Man/Stubborn Ghost"

Two painfully short pop ditties sounding straight outta the late '70s. As with previous releases, what makes this lot special is their attention to detail. The recording is so authentic to the power pop aesthetic—super tight and crisp. Maybe not as immediate as earlier releases, but if you are down with the sound of the BEAT, NERVES, ROGER C. REALE, this will rock your boat for *surrrrre*. (TB)
(HoZac)

THE GIRLS – "Remote View/Lord Auch"

This is a present-day band called the GIRLS from Seattle, not to be confused with any of the other bands named the GIRLS from various decades. It seems to me that you'd have to be pretty lazy to name your band the GIRLS these days. That having been said, the music here is pretty interesting. New wave-ish tunes with repetitive, robotic sounding riffs and vocals reminiscent of the A-FRAMES, but sounding slightly more organic. The GIRLS seem to be trying to make synthesizer pop with guitars. They succeed. (CK)
(Hozac)

THE GODS OF MACHO – "Macho" LP

Is this yet another tired Jack Black rock parody? No, it's worse than that. You yourselves, your parents, your friends and any fans you may have acquired should all be deeply embarrassed by, if not ashamed of this recording. Please stop making music. (AU)
(Flat Rat)

GOLDEN ERROR – "Refuse Me" EP

It's really unbelievable how high a pedestal I put all things Chris Thompson related, so a comparison to any band that falls under that umbrella is a huge compliment. And while I feel it's sort of cheap and easy to compare GOLDEN ERROR to Chris Thompson bands (they probably agree and are sick of hearing it), I can't help but go the lazy route since it's the highest honor I can give anyway. Thankfully the band is no knock-off or simple imitation, though the title track, "Refuse Me," could easily be on *Who Put Out the Fire* with a cohesive, driven bass and a guitar line to both match and take it one step further, going a little crazy. Somehow the Brooklyn band takes the MONORCHID melodic, angular, thumping formula and almost improves on it with more rawness and urgency. Though it is truly very MONORCHID, the output is less claustrophobic and repressed, and more swagger and rock. "New Weather Paranoia" is urgently driving rock and the flip is a bonus with Australian X covers. Going back to listen to the LP is on my to do list now. (AL)
(The Hard Sell)

GONER / LUNGE – split EP

GONER, from here in California, plays killer punk grind. Think EXCRUCIATING TERROR. Three tracks, just thick and nasty as fukk, with great negative lyrics to boot. GONER is definitely a band to watch out for. LUNGE, from Portland, made me feel like I wasted my time flipping the record. They play some sort of jokey mixture of stoner riffs and grind parts with silly lyrics—exactly the kind of band that the term

"powerviolence" *shouldn't* be applied to. And even worse, the mastering on their side is totally fukked—everything skips and pops and the songs all end abruptly. Whoever was supposed to listen to the test press didn't do their job. The GONER side is still good, though. Oh, and did I mention the GONER tracks play on 45 and the LUNGE tracks on 33? I really hate that shit. (VX)
(Intellect)

THE HAPPY KIDS – "Hey!" EP

This is like QUINTRON getting way less weird (i.e. interesting), growing a hipster mustache, donning some aviators and trying to play shitgaze. I am not impressed. And then they rip off a KINKS riff. Eh. (MM)
(Trash Rock)

HARDA TIDER – "Gatan Kallar" LP

This band is from Sweden and they indeed have members of SCUM BRIGADE and ASSEL, meaning they are all knee-deep in old school Scandi HC roots and you can smell what they are stepping in. Yes, they are gratuitously slathered with the Swedish hardcore/D-beat sound, but they are also somewhere in the land of NYHC between when it was good and just before the age of the basketball jersey, complete with chorus chant breakdowns. Love it. Awesomely tough vocals (but I think I could take this dude cuz he is Swedish). The guitar is driving with some metallic thrash and menacing chord progressions mixed in; the bass is there to embody heaviness, to battle the guitar and help the a-hole keep the beat; the drums are fairly simple and pounding with solid time and some fills here and there. Think of your favorite shit from TERRORIZER and MADBALL. Ha ha! Seriously though: some metallic stuff, some youth crew, some D-beat and some '90s Scandi shit—if you dig that, then this is your jam, which happens to be my jam. Oh, and they do a ONE WAY SYSTEM cover ("Stab the Judge"). Hard times my ass—by the looks of the full-color pics on inner sleeve, these guys are all about having good times, but I guess it is only possible because they are able to vent through their music cuz life is hard on the mean streets of Anytown, Sweden... The lyrics are in Swedish with an English word here and there, even the phase "no pasaran" appears—nice... My Swedish is limited to food and swearing, but I gather that HARDA TIDER is into graff, skating, ab tattoos and fighting...all worthwhile shit. Tough stuff, good stuff, hot stuff, get it... (MB)
(Harda Skivor)

HEARTBEEPS – "My Bones Are Tattooed" LP

Named after the '80s Andy Kaufman movie? Guess this is some folk from the defunct TV KILLERS. If my memory serves me right, I remember those Frogs putting on a hell of a live show at a long-gone SF venue. Sounds like the '90s stripped-down rockngaragenpunknroll of yore. Starts off with a bang with "Clinic Rejects" and is not really a stinker. Like "Break It Up" a lot too. Not groundbreaking and some songs will remind you of others but makes me want to chew a handful of Mini-Thins and jump around the room. (RO)
(Dead Beat)

HEAVY TIMES – "No Plans/Ice Age"

I apologize in advance for this review. I'm not necessarily a master manipulator of words when it comes to commentary on things that highly annoy or frustrate me. On top of that I feel that while this record does in fact deserve a negative review, it is also a matter of timing and despair with the over-saturation of this boring crap—my patience has been tested to its limit. So a culmination of this shit has basically pushed me to the edge and, unfortunately for HEAVY TIMES, one can place the blame on a number of artists who did not have to endure my temper and vitriol. I think perhaps normally I wouldn't be able to find the time or energy in myself to care about this sort of record, and instead would write a couple lines, the sum of which is basically nothing, fluffy air words, to mirror the absence of soul on the record, but I don't want to write a review like that, and no one wants to read a review like that. Why does this exist? Why does the band insist on naming themselves HEAVY TIMES when they are anything but? It's not a quirky, jokey jab at the audience to name yourself something you're not, it just displays an embarrassing lack of self awareness and poor humor. This is boring, '60s-style jangle bedroom pop from Chicago that goes nowhere, does nothing, and doesn't take a single chance. It just hangs in the air waiting for someone to care. No one is going to care. (AL)
(HoZac)

HERO DISHONEST – "Dangerous" LP

This is one of the most overlooked bands that I proclaim kicks ass. From Helsinki, Finland, not Sweden... *Dangerous* is hard to nail down, because while these four dudes play some mid-to-fast-tempo HC, there are some interesting departures from the usual style we get from that area of the world. I feel like this band is often misjudged because of what people expect from punk from the Nordic region. The album is definitely mid-'80s USHC heavy, with fast, frantic, straight-ahead songs and breakdowns, but I swear to god I heard some DEAD KENNEDYS mixed with BUTTTHOLE SURFERS in "Only Love Can Conquer." The recording is pretty slick but just a bit fuzzed out; the music itself is well played but not so polished that it sounds soulless. The drums are precise and the guitar is punk but ranges a bit from some rockin' stuff to some stoner rock chord progressions and there is definitely some wankage. The lyrics are awesome and sung in English. I love the lead singer's vocals—he sings in a gritty, frantic style with the touch of an accent. He is giving to us, man, and he is pissed... The song "Cliff Burton Will Have His Revenge on Sweden" is fucking awesome. This band has evolved in to something other than when they started (all the BLACK FLAG references I have seen in other reviews and such...) and I think it's a great result. Others will argue, but I don't give a fuck and neither does HERO DISHONEST. It's a good record and definitely worth checking out if you like your HC with a twist and are open to atypical sounds mixed in. (MB)
(IF Society / Sabotage)

HER SPECTACLES / THE PHOENIX FOUNDATION – split EP

The PHOENIX FOUNDATION is a band from Finland. There's also a PHOENIX FOUNDATION from New Zealand, and I have no idea what they sound like. The one on this EP plays pop punk with a tinge of melancholy, while being totally catchy. Later-era HÜSKER DÜ and touch of HOT WATER MUSIC will get you in the ballpark. HER SPECTALES is a Japanese power pop band. This type of music isn't my strong suit, but the songs have a strong melody and will have you tapping your toes and bobbing you head. (MD)
(Unsane Asylum / Poolside / Waterslide)

HIMEI – "Kankin" EP

When I first heard this EP I ran around to friends and

played it, asking, "What does this remind you of?" Everyone answered, "The COMES!" Japan's HIMEI has dished out their second EP and it is great! The vocals are completely desperate sounding making me think the singer is teetering between just hitting someone or stabbing them to death. I love the sound of it. Musically you get non-distorted fast punk that pulls from the ADK era of Japanese punk. Excellent! (MS)
(H:G Fact)

HIP COPS – "In the Shadow of a Grinding Death" EP

Raw old-school grindcore always warms my heart, and HIP COPS have lit my heart on fire. This Connecticut band does a great job of mixing grindcore, thrash and hardcore and when it comes down to it, they inhabit the same universe as early NAPALM DEATH and EXCRUCIATING TERROR. High/low vocals and wonderful mid-paced riffs, all before blasting away. This release is posthumous in that it was recorded in 2008 but the original label never released it. The band broke up and later decided to put the record out. That's too bad because I'd have liked to see them live and hear more music from them. (MH)
(Bullshit Propaganda)

IDLE HANDS – "Volatile Matters" EP

Whoa, this is pretty awesome! Nothing beats getting a record that's totally rad from a band you've never heard. If I hadn't read the sheet that came with this, I probably would have assumed these guys were from either Austin or Denton. This German band is made up of members of PRESS GANG and MISSING SHADOWS and plays fast-ish rock with a distinct X-meets-HEX DISPENSERS vibe to it, but without the horror shtick, and clean guitars. It's been a while since I have been instantly hooked on a record. Time to go track down their first EP and LP. (BD)
(Rockstar)

KILSLUG – "God's Funeral" 45

Not counting that limited live LP from 2009, this is the first recording from Boston's KILSLUG in about 25 years, though these two songs aren't too far from the material on Taang! Records' 1986 *Answer the Call* LP. Honestly, unlike the dozens upon dozens of other '80s-era groups that have recently reunited (like JERRY'S KIDS, F.U.'S and DYS, just to name a few), the band's doom-metal-inflected dirge-punk doesn't seem like a weird style to pick up again after so long. This stuff is plodding and creepy, and (can't believe I'm saying this) I'm curious to hear more from this reformed unit. (CS)
(Necro-Tone)

LA LA VASQUEZ – "Buoy" EP

This 7" EP is a nice jump to new heights for this all-girl trio from London/Brighton, England. LA LA VASQUEZ has been portrayed as a bit more pop than the listener might finally discover upon hearing, and this record trots further down the angularly haunting post-punk paths they slashed towards on their debut *Claire Savage* single. With a homo-erectus thump out of Chuck Warner's *Messethetics* collection, the girls push the echo-y synchronized group howl to the front, one or two splitting to the side with a witchy wailing in the distance. The gang-of-girls chant lends itself to a misfit CHIN CHIN or something; they might shank you if you don't pogo, dudes. It comes as no surprise the group's favorite BEATLE is Ringo, thumping and rolling like a gag you can cut a rug to. "Buoy" shines these qualities best, with "Why?" coming in a close second. An upcoming 7" EP on UK's Sex Is Disgusting will hopefully push these side-street walkers even further down the no-wavey boundaries of pop. (JS)
(M'lady's)

LIFE GIVING WATERS – "Almost There..." CD

What a difference a bit of singing can make. Ten tracks of modern hardcore. Mostly pretty fast and on point, with a nice bit of melody and lots of math-rock thrown in. The first half dozen and the last number have horrible screamo vocals—a tuneless, deranged Ian MacKaye kind of howl. And then there's a bit of blessed relief with some actual singing. Makes it almost palatable in parts. I think these chaps might be Romanian, though they sing in English. And scream in English, too, far as I can ascertain. (RK)
(Unsane Asylum)

LOVELOAD – "The Human Resourceful" CD

This used to be called lo-fi. Which was good, but bad in some cases. This is more bad circa 1990 as it comes across as a one-man show with off-key vocals. A little HÜSKER DÜ, GUIDED BY VOICES and PAVEMENT, done badly. (RL)
(self-released)

LOW THREAT PROFILE – "Product #2" LP

A classic! This is the highly anticipated follow-up to the EP of last year, ten years in the making and totally worth it. Fifteen tracks of fast-as-fuck, stop-on-a-dime brutal thrash. Tooth-chippin' thrash, even. This makes me want to throw this piece of shit iMac out the window and smash all the shiny fixed gears blocking the sidewalk on Divisadero, and I'm usually a real mellow dude you know? Andy has one of the greatest voices in hardcore as far as I'm concerned—instantly recognizable and able to just let it rip in a way that comes off effortlessly—and Domino writes totally catchy and brutal riffs. It all just comes together perfectly. I'm at a loss for words really; this is just timeless hardcore played by legit lifers. Drawing on the past for sure, but totally standing on its own as a great current record that can be judged on its merits, regardless of past achievements. (AH)
(Deep Six)

MARGIN WALKER – "Departure and Return" CD

Seems like a mean trick to play on someone. As you can imagine, I had high hopes for this because of where the band name comes from (or at least where I assume it comes from). And the opening minute or so does have a vague FUGAZI sound—mellow rock with prominent bass—but that first minute is about the only thing hardcore or punk or post-punk. This is slick, bland AOR. Remember after grunge got big in 1991, the major labels signed all sorts of rock bands and tried to sell them as grunge? They were over-produced, slick and rarely rocked unless they were the watered-down metal stuff being repacked as grunge? That's what this sounds like. Awful! (MH)
(self-released)

MEDIA BLITZ – "No Regrets" EP

Circle-pit friendly Orange County hardcore that brings back fond memories of dogpiles and sing-alongs circa 2001. A speed-picking guitar that rivals the WASTE and a delivery that comes off like Sweden's OUTLAST, with whom they share tasteful melodic undertones. Awesome posi lyrics about staying true to yourself and staying generally positive. The breakdowns are killer, the riffs are great; you will hear no complaints from me. (WN)
(self-released)

MERCHANDISE – "(Strange Songs) in the Dark" LP

Fuzzed-out, melancholic guitar gloom with vocals that bring to mind ARTHUR RUSSELL. Actually, this seems like a more nostalgic, blissed-out and reverential but less stark take on the first NEW ORDER 12". It's sleepy and hazy post-goth-punk, with surprising bursts of TOM VERLAINE guitars in places, but mostly just a messy totality of sound. I think there are ex-CULT RITUALs involved, but that has no bearing on anything contained within. This is otherworldy sounding; it's transportative, creating a specific sort of morning-after feel, and is strangely comforting but disorientating. A suspended atmosphere; its vagueness feels total. (LG)
(Drugged Conscience / Katorga Works)

MILK MUSIC – "Beyond Living" 12"

Debut 12" from Olympia/Seattle band MILK MUSIC. I get a distinct late-'80s/early-'90s vibe from this record—that period where people from the hardcore scene branched out to explore other types of rock music, often (though not always) with a punk spirit. Think SST, Homestead, Sub Pop, etc. Specifically, I'm reminded quite a bit of DINOSAUR JR in the melodies, sung vocals and 'big' guitar' approach; also later HÜSKER DÜ and even a little of NIRVANA. (Oh, yeah—of U2 on the title track where they steal the riff from "I Will Follow"!) Subtle but huge hooks that are delivered with a sense of wide-eyed joy tinged with melancholy, as if one knew the good times don't last forever so you might as well celebrate 'em now. This is *rock*—DIY, underground rock—and it's great... Even Martin likes it! (CS)
(self-released)

MIRRORS AND WIRES – "Mercitron" EP

This is a pretty basic yet great little pop surfy psych single from New Jersey band MIRRORS AND WIRES. An alt-countryish song and two fun surf-undertoned jaunty numbers that, at times, sound like they could have been used as alternate versions for the *Kids in the Hall* theme song. Who doesn't love that song? All of the tracks here are short and have limited vocals, but what vocals there are are done right. Totally a sweet single worth a couple spins. (AL)
(Headcount)

MOB RULES – "The Donor" LP

After several spins I decreed that this LP is a stone ripper. Every track here is an exercise in where hardcore can and will be taken in the near future with its constant changes in time and speed, atypical riffing and progressions, weird Ginn-esque discordant leads and the right raw recording for the sound. I would say that it sounds like a heavy hardcore band has gone more BL'AST/FLAG and realistically that is exactly what is going on. They've stepped away from their more brutal powerviolence sound and off on a tangent more focused on writing interesting sounds while maintaining the power, and I'd say its successful so far. I like this record. A lot. (JU)
(Zandor)

MOTOR 49 – "Alle Natch" CD

The CD cover is horrible Rat Fink greaser type o' shit, so I feared the worst, but it's not as bad as it seemed. Pretty one-dimensional 1-2-1-2 punk, like a dumbed-down Spanish SLIME. It's fine and all… but pretty underwhelming! (TB)
(Commando Camelot, no info)

MOUNTAIN SCREAMER – CD

Primitive, bluesy rock from this duo. The music is stripped down and raw. The singer has a bit of a Southern drawl. Pleasant enough. (CK)
(self-released)

NECROMONGO – "Grabaciones Desde la Ultratumba" EP

The name reminds me of someone's kid brother's metal band practicing in the neighbors' garage, or maybe a kick-ass wrestler. That means I love it. Gnarly fucking kick-yo-ass hardcore from Peru. Super basic, noisy guitar and drums like I dig. One of the songs translates to "I Don't Give a Fuck"!!! I picture a dirty-ass basement with kids passed out from huffing too much glue and rats nibbling on their faces. In other words…rules! (RO)
(Lengua Armada)

NEGATIVE APPROACH – "Friends of No One" CD EP

If this came to me as a demo, I would be incredibly into it and would be obsessively following the band for the next thing they put out. Luckily, the future is now the past (huh?) and we already know what a fucking killer and monolithic band NEGATIVE APPROACH is. In general, when a demo tape or practice recording gets released, the question is "Is this essential?" In this case, if you are a fan of this band: yes. If you are a fan of Detroit hardcore between 1979 and 1985: yes. If you like hardcore or just got into it, you should at least hear this, so you know what the fuck HC is supposed to sound like. The first two tracks ("Friends of No One" and "Obsession") are unknown to the HC world, but should be heard because they are genuinely good songs. There is another unknown track called "Cargo Cult," a cover of "I Got a Right" by the STOOGES and the songs "Kiss Me Kill Me" and "Genocide" on this recording. As for the sound quality, this is a fucking demo/practice tape that they recorded on a shitty boom box! *You can't get any punker than that!* Aside from the feedback that appears once a song kicks in (no more than on a CONFUSE record), it's actually pretty good. John Brannon's vocal style is more slurred and it's not as gruff, but it's still tough as hell—he is still singing his guts out. The lineup on this release is not the "classic" one (with the McCullough bros and OP Moore). Either way, it's worth hearing because not only is it a piece of our history from a band that changed HC, but because it's a decent bunch of songs. This release is not the same caliber of the well-known classic material, but it is good and it's cool that this is available to us. There is supposed to be a massive multi-disc box set coming out with more of the 1984 recordings, live stuff and alternate versions of the material we already know. As a Midwest lady with a deep love for NEGATIVE APPROACH and early Detroit HC, you bet your ass I am buying it. (MB)
(Taang!)

NO CLASS – "Keine Klasse" LP

Ten-track 12" of hardcore. When the band gets going they sound really good, although it loses a bit of momentum when it gets into some of the breakdowns and gang backup vocals. With that said, the slowest track, titled "Hate Crime," is very fucking cool and one of the standouts on this record. In all, it's a good LP. (MS)
(Deranged)

NOT ON TOUR – CD

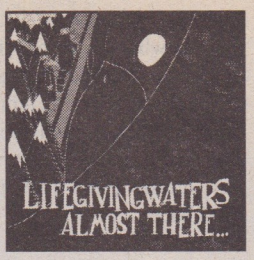
These guys are an ultra fast melodic hardcore band from Israel. There are a few pop songs thrown in. If anything they could be compared to a non-political early PROPAGANDHI. Or maybe FRENZAL RHOMB. Sometimes the singer screams and sometimes she sings so in tune that you wonder if they are using an auto-tune. Which I'm sure isn't happening. Right? The album is complete with cover art by the hardest working album cover punk artist, Christy Road. Dang, it seems like every month there is at least one new album with her artwork on it. Every pop band wants a piece of her; she's like the modern day pop punk equivalent to Pushead or something. But yeah, a good CD. Will make the kids jump around for sure. (FS)
(Diner Junkie)

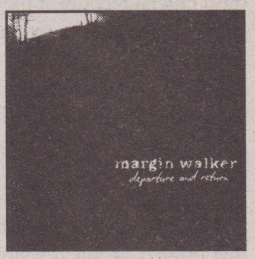
OILTANKER – "Crusades" EP

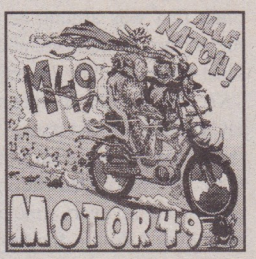
I don't know why there aren't more bands like this on the West Coast. I keep getting killer D-beat records to review but they are all from the East Coast and frankly I'm not super impressed with the local crust scene right now. OILTANKER hails from Connecticut and plays crust with a lot of D-beats and less melodic riffs than the usual American bands of this type. It's more in the vein of WOLFPACK/WOLFBRIGADE and other bands that play up the death metal influence. Three of the four members share vocal duties, which gives them the option of a more layered approach on some of the songs, but it always sounds pissed. The cover art is also rad with a crazy-looking mounted warrior in dragon armor with the severed hand of capitalism impaled on its sword. (BL)
(Rats of the Capitol / Bullshit Propaganda)

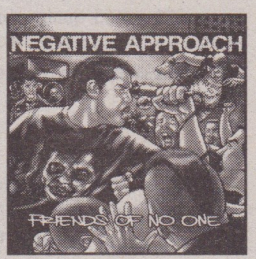
ORDER – "Sakasama/Kajome"

One of the more idiosyncratic bands of the recent Japanese scene, ORDER sounds after several releases like, well, ORDER!!! Upbeat, swirling, churning, chorus-backed, odd but catchy near-anthems of mid-tempo punk rock. The two solidly









great tracks, "Sakama" is driven by a pogo-ready bassline while "Kajome" tilts back and forth with its off-time drumbeat and pointed vocals. Each 7" ORDER graces us with refines their classic *Taep'O-Dong* LP but takes the sound further in its own direction. Comes with a simple inlay of their new-wavish/early-1980s looking design. Great! (KS)
(H:G Fact)

OTTAWA – LP

The OTTAWA/JIHAD split 12" was one of the most crucial records of the '90s, even though most people at the time essentially considered it a one-sided record (I pulled out the record and cranked the JIHAD side last week...it's pretty good, just a shame that it is on the back side of such a brilliant piece of wax). OTTAWA were fukking *pissed*, not at all what I was expecting from a side project of the emotional hardcore band CURRENT; a completely evil and chaotic dual-vocal assault that offered as much venom on the lyric sheet as on the microphone. The record just sounded ugly and dangerous, and it was heavier than any DIY punk that was around at the time without being metal (though there are manic and perfectly sloppy blast-beats all over the record). From the opening *"Kiss the Goat!"* sample and a vaguely Swedish-HC-influenced first track, OTTAWA blasts through thirteen tunes, and I am just as floored now as I was then. "Victim of Dedication" makes the hairs on my arms stand up every time, and lines like "Glassed-over eyes / You're fucking idiots / Watch as your life is reduced to a pile of shit / As you lie down and roll in it" (from "Pacification") give you a pretty good idea of where they were coming from. A few years after this was released, it was the norm for hardcore bands to take the time and effort to make heavy and powerful-sounding records, but at this point in the DIY realm, only BORN AGAINST had started down the road that HIS HERO IS GONE would later trailblaze, and I think this record is a logical bridge (stylistically and sonically) between those two bands. This reissue has been rumored for years and years, and cheers to Residue for making it happen (the weird cover photo is off-putting, but once the needle drops and my ears carry the vastly improved sound quality into my brain, it doesn't matter what's on the front—just what's inside). An epic and essential release. (WN)
(Residue)

PANIC – "13" LP

Another gem of a reissue on the Sing Sing label from New York: This is the 1978 debut LP of Amsterdam's PANIC. Unlike the artier Dutch bands like RONDOS or the EX, their brand of punk rock was in the DEAD BOYS/DAMNED mode: heavily based in traditional rock'n'roll but played with swagger and raw attitude. This LP is great and the (potentially embellished!) liner notes add a lot to the equation. If you're not lucky enough to boast a copy of the original in your collection, seek this out. I wonder if Sing Sing will see fit to reissue their Dutch-language *Bereslecht* EP? (AM)
(Sing Sing)

PANZERBASTARD – "Centurion" CD

There are four songs on this not-quite-sixteen-minute recording and two of them are CELTIC FROST covers. Why even put this record out? It's only half your own music. And what's with the band's name only being one word? Already we're not off on the right foot. The songs that the band actually wrote are decent mid-tempo metal-flavored crust. Wait, there is a secret song at the end of the fourth track. It's like a shitty little electro dance pop jam. Jesus Christ. I'm trying not to hate this band but they are making it hard. Their MySpace page lists a lot of great influences like HELLHAMMER (which they spelled as two words), TERRORIZER, NAUSEA, MOTÖRHEAD, ASSÜCK, and AXEGRINDER but as soon as I saw that they were from Boston it clicked that they actually sound like a cheap TOXIC NARCOTIC or some kind of band like that. This band has failed me on all levels. I hate this record. (BL)
(Patac)

PEACE CORPSE – "Terror of Quincy" LP

PEACE CORPSE was from Pomona, Southern California, and this nine-song album combines the tracks from their *Quincy* EP from 1983 and three songs from 1985's *Terror of History*, which is notable in that it featured Eric Wood from MAN IS THE BASTARD in an early outing. Not sure why Toxic Shock only chose a few songs from that record rather than offering a complete discography, but I haven't heard the original record so maybe the other songs aren't that good. As you might expect from the timing, there are more differences than simply lineup changes between the two recordings. The early stuff is pretty sludgy, raw punk rock, with a lot of personality and a great snotty attitude. The later recordings found them embracing a more post-punk/new wave style: to me, they sound a lot like MAGAZINE. Not bad by any means, but the tracks from the first EP are what makes this record worth seeking out. (AM)
(Toxic Shock)

THE PERENNIALS – "Oh Kimmy" EP

Three tracks of lo-fi garage pop. Hints of early ELEVATORS and some later ROKY ERICKSON. Some doo-wop influences thrown in, which kicks it in line with PERSONAL AND THE PIZZAS. It's a happy record for happy people, which I do believe I'm one. (SD)
(Eradicator)

PHAROAH – "I Murderer I/Two Thousand Screams"

This is an awesome two songs of sludgy, noisy, doomed-out hardcore from New Jersey. At least it sounds like it started life as heavy and dark hardcore but was forged in the flames of NEUROSIS and shaped on the anvil of EYEHATEGOD into something else, something darker, more brutal. I caught labelmates GRAY GHOST's record a few months back and was blown away by the similar style. It's like everybody realized how amazing THOU is and dudes from the hardcore scene started playing slower, crushing metal with roots in punk. Whatever is going on in the heads of the people in bands like PHAROAH, I'm stoked on what you are doing and want more of your records. (BL)
(A389)

POISON IDEA – "Learning to Scream" EP

POISON IDEA is my favorite band of all time, so I've seriously been put to task here. It appears that this 1998 EP is available again for a whole new generation of cretins. While this incarnation of the band lacked the great Pig's axe, for a scab guitar player in any hardcore band, I can't imagine how much it ruled to rage away with the classic Dean, Jerry and Tense lineup next to you and he surely holds his own. While having a few good riffs and hooks, the songs that you'll find on the B-side of this record are pretty arbitrary compared to the A-side, which is a whole other story. The title track, "Learning to Scream," rips fucking hard and would fit right in alongside the tracks on *War All the Time*, *Feel the Darkness*, or the *Ian MacKaye* 12". It's a great tune with awesome dynamics—what more do you want? (JU)
(Taang!)

POOL PARTY – "Pool Party Yeah!" CD

Upon opening this CD and seeing that these dudes are still dressing like the Hawaiian shirts and golf shorts 1997 model ME FIRST AND THE GIMME GIMMES, with the exception of the one Mr. SOCIAL DISTORTION, I just knew that they *had* to be European. There is something terribly dated and flat about this Icelandic group's generic, occasional EPOXIES-tinged electronics, we-wish-we-were-the-DWARVES titty jokes, SCREECHING-QUEERS-core. On a good day I'd liken 'em to a sloppy SMUGGLERS, but today is just an average day. (GG)
(Livid)

PORCODIO – "Nessun Posto Per Me" EP

This is Brandon from No Way Records and Paolo from Italy's ANTI-YOU. The high-pitched vocals hit you with the right amount of treble and fuzziness for an all-out attack, but curiously maintains a fluidity that causes an exciting sonic confusion. There is an urgency to this record that maintains the right amount of control. I suspect this will be sold out soon, so I hope you can grab a copy. The music is fast, fast, fast with the menacing, lightly distorted guitar pulling you along by your guts. The drums range from galloping to just all-out blasting with some really clean and perfectly timed rolls—fuck me... The bass is just as plodding. This is snotty hardcore that hints at NEGAZIONE and the less happy bits of L'AMICO DI MARTUCCI and would be at home on a bill with CHRONIC SEIZURE. The song "Non Torna Mai" is the shit. (MB)
(Lengua Armada)

RAPE REVENGE – "Car Ride with a Vivisection Intern" EP

Holy shit. Holy shit. Holy shit. This record makes me want to cry and run and die happy and start a band and fuck shit up. I was excited about RAPE REVENGE when I heard their name, I was even more excited when I watched shitty live YouTube videos of them and this surely does not disappoint but only blows my mind even further. Blistering hardcore that starts out slow, near sludge tempos, and then speeds up to breakneck harshness. My reaction to this is extremely visceral in such an extremely good fucking way. The EP scores even more points for being bluntly and radically feminist—from the lyrics, to the insert that has explanations to all the songs, down to the radical poster/manifesta included. Seriously. Seriously. Best record of 2010. (MM)
(True)

REALITY CRISIS – "Sound of Destruction" EP

Pro'ly you'll buy this just cuz it's on H:G Fact, or cuz their other shit rules. Either way, it's a wise investment. This record charges and gallops from the first note, rough and savage, attacking; you could sing along if you could tell what he's saying. The lyrics are provided in Japanese and English, but I can't tell from listening which he's using. Just point and yell! The second side opens with an extended intro, or an instrumental song, whichever, it's a fine respite from the ass-kicking this band delivers. Modern Japanese crust-influenced fast hardcore with just a touch of complexity. Sick. (JM)
(H:G Fact)

REDONDO BEAT – "Meet" CD

Sugary power pop that takes hints from the softer side of those swinging '60s. The gentle moments of BIG STAR mixed in with the popper bits of the BLONDES come to mind. I was thinking maybe a bit too sweet for my harsh tastes, specially after eating all that chocolate I stole off the *MRR* breakfast bar, sorry. The more I listen the more I'm digging. Guess I am a chocoholic after all; now back to the stash in the kitchen. (SD)
(Dionysus)

ROCKET REDUCERS – LP

This band reminds me so much of San Francisco's JACK SAINTS. ROCKET REDUCERS are from Ontario, Canada, and this is their debut LP. Non-stop fast, frantic songs about broken hearts, hanging out and getting drunk. Twelve songs on a 45 RPM LP. Yikes! (CK)
(Dead Beat)

ROMAN CANDLES – "Whatever Happened to VBK/More Man"

Two infectious tracks of jangly pop punk along the lines of ONION FLAVORED RINGS. Occasional tremolo-laden guitar leads add a hint of UK DIY bedroom shambles. DEAD MILKMEN meet TV PERSONALITIES uptown. (AM)
(Young Foole)

ROT IN HELL – "NIU" EP

I hate referencing Holy-Terror-style hardcore because it's just a played-out, possibly lazy point of reference on my part; however, here it is not only called for but totally unavoidable. ROT IN HELL does an exceptionally good job at nailing this style. They're far superior to BLIND TO FAITH, LIVING HELL and other current bands that try to capture a similar sound. This EP may even end up being a classic of the genre. They have the speed-picked riffs and occasional melody, later-INTEGIRTY-style vocals and a sort of melancholic feel to the whole thing—a feel that makes *Those Who Fear Tomorrow* what it is. There's a sort of occult aesthetic that, while it fits the style and looks pretty decent, is also somewhat predictable. Then again, I don't know what else they'd use for cover art. The EP starts out scorching and maintains its intensity really well. It's a shame this is only one-sided, but a complete one side it is. (DB)
(A389)

DIE SCHWARZEN SCHAFE – "Jetzt Kommen Die Jahre" CD

DIE SCHWARZEN SCHAFE must be one of Germany's longest-running punk bands: I think they've been at it constantly since 1985, although I can't say I've religiously followed their career. I've definitely been seeing their name about forever, though. This latest release is pretty by-the-numbers punk rock—buzzsaw guitar sound with metallic edges, angry-sounding German vocals, sing-along choruses. I'd maybe lump this in with later material by the likes of OI POLLOI. Nothing groundbreaking here, but it's a solid release. (AM)
(Teenage Rebel)

SEVERANCE PACKAGE / STREET EATERS – split EP

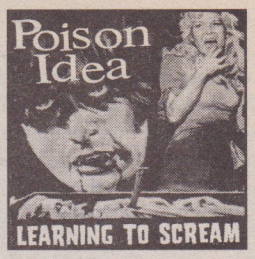
I liked SEVERANCE PACKAGE's first EP a lot, but the song on here is light-years better than that record. It has elements that remind me of the best parts of CHASED AND SMASHED, WEIRDOS, and GOD HATES COMPUTERS. Totally fun, bouncy punk that sounds instantly classic and memorable in a way that is hard to do in these times. On the flip side is STREET EATERS, a great two-piece bass-and-drums band from the East Bay. Even though I am friends with these folks and have played shows with them, I am not super familiar with their music. The song on this record is epic, engaging, powerful and beautiful. I like that STREET EATERS achieve a thick, full sound by using their two voices to wrap around each other and act as their own instrument. If everything they have recorded is half as good as this, I am a fool for missing out. These two bands are not that similar, but manage to compliment each other well to make an outstanding record. (GH)
(Dead Broke)

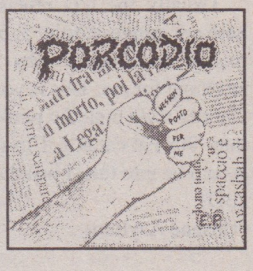
SEXDROME – "Grown Younger" LP

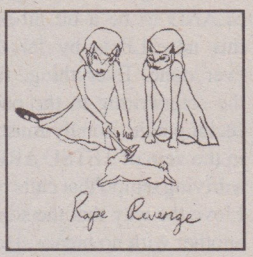
Yup, another "SEX-" band, and this one is really quite a weird listen. Lo-fi in the way that most current kvlt black metal is, which, when combined with the vocals, compartmentalizes it on the black metal shelf in my little sheep brain, and I'm having a hard time moving it to a different part of the warehouse. Creeping, oppressive and meandering discordant intros segue to and fro between faster riffs, "oppressive" being the real key word there. I even hear some straggling elements of jangle-y garage pop but it all works well in the end to create some sort of new raw musical sound that is yet to be (but only one step away from being) fully exploited. (JU)
(Youth Attack)

SHANGHAI RIVER – "Binary Code Will Enslave All of Humankind" LP

Snakepit zine readers probably already know SHANGHAI RIVER, as its mastermind seems to be the cornerstone of this







band. OFF WITH THEIR HEADS is the number one influence I detect here, with LEATHERFACE coming in a close second. Has anyone coined the term *Razorcake*-core yet? That's the most apt description I can come up with for this brand of pop punk. "No matter how thin you slice it, it's still bologna." (BD)
(Let's Pretend/ADD)

SHATTERHAND – "Complacency Is Not an Option" CD

Usually the CD releases that come through here are cringe-worthy at best. I wouldn't classify this one as cringe-worthy, but it isn't really doing anything for me. This is your standard Fat-Wreck-Chords-style melodic punk similar the bulk of the late-'90s Fat catalog. I'm sure there are folks who would be into this, I just don't know who they are. (BD)
(Unsane Asylum)

SLANG – "Life Made Me Hardcore" LP

Fucking unrelenting! I've always found SLANG to be a bit hit-or-miss in the past, but this new LP is by far the best work they've ever done. Everything, from the production to the songwriting to the packaging, is completely fucking epic. Totally muscular hard-fucking-core in the vein of TETSU ARREI and CLOWN, with a driving tempo that calls back to GAUZE as well. I love the way that the songs are tracked one into another with no breaks. Heavy, fast and desperate in the best possible way. If you have any interest in Japanese hardcore, or just the cutting edge of hardcore in general, it would behoove you to pick up this LP while you can still get the limited-to-700 swank gatefold, poster and blood-red vinyl edition. Crucial, absolutely crucial. (AU)
(Prank)

SLOANE PETERSON – "Second Chances" EP

Yet another stupid fucking record by a pop punk band singing songs about dumb problems and girls. But guess what? This one is actually good! No, it's fucking great! I'm not shitting you. Sometimes you're blessed among the piles of bad records at the *MRR* compound and you get a hook-filled diamond in the rough. This is some solid pop punk that reminds me of the best parts of early GAUNT, HÜSKER DÜ and SICKO. All three songs are spectacular and it's all over too quickly. I want more! If more pop bands played with this much energy and great songwriting, the genre wouldn't have such a bad rap. (GH)
(Hang Up)

SLUGFUCKERS – "Three Feet Behind Glass/ Instant Classic" LP

This is a reissue of the first two EPs from these influential and vastly imaginative Australian punk weirdos. Both were recorded within a month of each other in 1979; the first 7" is modestly titled *Instant Classic* and is placed on the B-side here. "Deaf Disco" is a propulsive, bass-driven sprawl overrun by a ranter's snarls—like being stuck on the bus with five different people's walkmans blasting, and the obligatory crazy person, also blasting. Title's a purposely un-artful reference to PIL. The next song disintegrates further, you're on the floor getting berated by a drunken brass band, "*Poptowwwwwwnes*." The EP on the A-side is much more accessible somehow, though it's just as chaotic and perplexing, frantic drums and feedback muffle the ranting vocals, "I am a mechanical boy" to the rhythm of "I am an anarchist…" This is manic, viciously playful music, it's claustrophobic and mocking. DIY that falls somewhere between a less twee HOMOSEXUALS and CRISPY AMBULANCE. Investigate pronto! (LG)
(Insolito)

THE SPINOFFS – "Stayin' Alive" EP

Pop punk blitzkrieg from Vancouver based SPINOFFS. Originally slated to be one of Mutant Pop's final releases, it sat unpressed until It's Alive rescued it from limbo. Five tracks go by in a flash including the cover song to end all punk cover songs, "Stayin' Alive." I'm not a huge pop punk fan, but these guys have a nice rough and ballsy sound, and the songs go by so quick, I'm sure I would accidentally have fun if I ever caught them live. First 300 copies on orange wax, includes download code. (GB)
(It's Alive)

STICKS – "Scrapes" EP

The word post-punk is sort of meaningless. It can mean XMAL DEUTSCHLAND or GANG OF FOUR or even SWELL MAPS (despite the fact I am pretty sure that band were making the same sort of music pre-'77 as they were post, so how are they post-anything-punk??!!). The STICKS are somewhere between Epic Soundtracks' interpretation of punk and the early '80s output of Postcard Records. This is not punk-funk. Loping basslines, clean trebly guitar, monotone yet somehow also sing-songy vocals—like a totally un-aggro FALL or a less depressed JOSEF K. Can something be perky and monotone? I guess! One of the basslines sounds like the theme song from the *Green Hornet*. I bet this band plays shows with LA LA VASQUEZ and TRASH KIT and WETDOG… The UK is a fertile ground for this sound right now. (LG)
(M'Lady's)

STOP BREATHING – "What I Want" EP

I love when a record surprises and excites me when I'm starting to feel jaded, and STOP BREATHING's EP has done the trick. *What I Want* is boss from start to end, with a style reaching that nether region where '81 hardcore meets late '80s power-chord roughness. That's a pretty good place to be in my book. Four songs and all of them are up-tempo hardcore smashers. The lyrics on a couple are pretty impressive, like "The Eye," which begins as an observation of doomsday theories prevalent today, then laments that we're bringing about our own destruction, and climaxes with a screaming call to arms to make a change and save ourselves instead of waiting for the end. The greedy American lifestyle is the main target here. Awesome. (BG)
(Rotten to the Core)

TATTLE TALES - "Moon Glasses" CD

A mix of power pop, indie rock and (due to the keyboards) a bit of new wave. In non-punk terms this reminds me of the THERMALS. In the early '90s this might have been on eMpTy or Sub Pop. A good seven-song release that's an enjoyable listen. (RL)
(Hang Up)

TILTWHEEL – "The High Hate Us" LP

In the world of apolitical, poppy drunk punk, TILTWHEEL reigns supreme. For real, they are a really big deal. There are like shitloads of people with TILTWHEEL tattoos. Or go to the Fest in Gainesville and mention TILTWHEEL to anybody you see drinking beer out of camo-colored beer koozie. They'll tell you, in between specs of flying spit, that TILTWHEEL changed their life. It's weird the mystique that surrounds this band, because they don't do anything that hasn't been done before, nor do they do anything particularly original. So where does the lofty acclaim come from? It comes from doing everything just right. If you're a party dude (or gal), really into sloppy pop punk, and really drunk (on a continuous basis), it feels like TILTWHEEL is playing the soundtrack to your life. The songs are up-tempo and catchy. They usually make the party dudes raise their fist in the air and shake it while clutching a pint glass close to their heart. The songs are about telling people you don't like to fuck off, love (or lack thereof) and being sick of this world. And even if the song isn't directly about consuming alcohol, there is usually at least one reference to it in each song. For you folks into this scene, you'll love this album; it's got some really good songs on it. Well, aside from the first song on the album where the singer repeatedly calls someone a "stupid cunt." Not a fan of that one. But *Razorcake*-nation, look out for this album, you'll love it! (FS)
(ADD)

TOO MANY DAVES – "Weekend at Dave's" LP

The drawing on the cover of this LP features shirtless dudes, a shark holding a beer, a monkey, a puking smurf and a bong. You can probably guess that we are swiftly being dragged, kicking and screaming, into some Florida Fest territory. Goddamn. These stupid songs sound like they were written in 30 minutes. Knowing that this band shares members with TILTWHEEL and has song titles like "Dudes Like Us," "Dudes Room" and "Duderonomy," you can probably make an educated guess about what this sounds like. Party music, plain and simple. It's true that I think this is stupid but it's also true that no one makes good party records anymore and that is exactly what this is. I'll bet that if I spent a night on a porch with Davey Tiltwheel, he could convince me that

this is good. A gatefold cover for this though? Come on! (GH)
(ADD)

TORTURED TONGUES – "Let Me Down" EP

HoZac somehow finds the time to put an actual punk 7", which by some ironic twist of fate could've actually benefited from the lo-fi production that most of the HoZac stuff I've heard employs. This is '70s punk with a modern update; A-side and the B-side are decent plodpunks that I'd like to hear live and with a bit more energy (I'm not one of those "faster" guys, but this should be faster). The third song however is a SCREAMERS-by-way-of *KBD Vol. #281* that I dig the most. My advice to the singer of this band: Get loaded next time or start smoking as this could've benefited from a little more nastiness. I like it. (BB)
(HoZac)

TOTSUGEKI SENSYA – "Chain of Tragedy" EP

This band may be a bit familiar to some due to their split with FUDGE on 625 Records, but this 2008 recording blows their side of that split out of the water. Combining the fuzz of DISCLOSE with the metallic edge of BEYOND DESCRIPTION, these five tracks are distinctively Japanese in the songwriting style and burly choruses while the rabid vocals and ramshackle recording give them their own identity that rides the line between noise-core and more mainstream Japanese HC. These guys have been toiling in relative obscurity for a while, and I hope this is the record that brings them a bit more recognition among the noise set. You can't argue that the "arrrghs" in "Chain" aren't flawless. R.I.P. to guitarist Shinya, I hope the band survives. (AU)
(Lengua Armada)

TOXIC FUSE – "Can't Beat My Love/Complete Control"

Side A of this single is messy garage rock with these desperate, agony-filled vocals. I like the singer Toxic's style. His voice is deep and forlorn. The music is distorted and driving. The guitarist feeds back and uses a bit of his wah-wah pedal. Not too much, just enough. All together it sounds pretty weird and cool. B-side is a cover of BIG BOYS' "Complete Control." Unfortunately, Toxic kind of cleans up his vocals on that one. He sounds too melodic. Where's the gruffness that I like so much? This cover ends up sounding too much like the original. I would have preferred to hear it in the style he uses on the A-side. (CK)
(Helltunes)

TROOPS OF TOMORROW – "The World Won't Listen" EP

Fuck. This record sounded *so* fucking cool when I first put it on!! The opening guitar riff sounded so much like MENACE that it blew me away!! Once the vocals kicked in, they weren't as catchy as I woulda liked 'em to be, but the song still had a really cool '80s UK Oi vibe similar to the 4-SKINS at times. That was the title track on the A-side. On the B-side, the opener continued in a similar style, but the second song got a little gruffer and reminded me more of an early US hardcore sound that was still influenced by UK punk, sorta like old AGNOSTIC FRONT was. So overall, this is a pretty fuckin' cool 7" worth checking out!! (ML)
(Photobooth)

TROPIEZO / XTRA VOMIT – split EP

XTRA VOMIT plays intense, thrashy, youth-crew-inclined hardcore that makes me feel the same way I did the first time I heard BETERCORE, who are fairly similar musically and lyrically—this is one of the highest compliments I can give. This band's energy and passion just fucking leaps off the record, as this two-piece seamlessly goes from blast-beats into a breakdown to a pissed off verse or something else, trading off vocal duties/sing-alongs with their friends, including some audibly mixed-gender gang choruses. I can't stop listening to this record, and right now, I want nothing more than to be in a basement in Western Michigan screaming along to XTRA VOMIT with the Grand Rapids/Muskegon kids, as well as anyone from Florida or wherever else that happens to be in town. Now that the bar is set sky high for the other side of the split, I'll say that TROPIEZO is great hardcore from Puerto Rico, who I remember from their split 7" with OUTRAGED. I'd say this recording is equally good, a *tad* slower and perhaps more introspective sounding than the last, but they could be on the same record and it wouldn't be out of place. (DG)
(IFB)

TRUTHDEALER – "The Contrarian" LP

These dudes got something going on. It's not always what I need in my own life. They sound like a tight and experienced band. They utilize the straight 4/4 style, getting off it and coming back multiple times in a song. The drummer uses staccato pounding and even fucking blast-beats. The bass player is a big guy who wrote most of the songs and does most of the yelling. The lyrics are not real serious. They're always jumping around from this to that, but sometimes they're just wanky instead of wild. Other times it's an apocalyptic pummeling. If the songwriting was a little tighter, or if it were an eight-song 10" instead of a sixteen-song 12", I could rave more about this release. Too much momemtum is lost and regained in each song for my tastes, even though there are rad songs and rad parts to most every song. There are 500 copies, with six different color covers, one for each label involved. (JM)
(FDH / P. Trash / Resurrection)

THE UGLY BEATS – "Motor!" CD

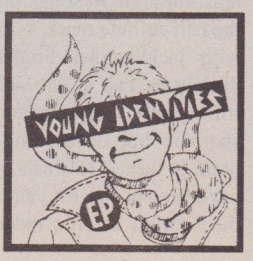
Classic '60s-style garage rock from this Austin, TX group. Vintage equipment playing vintage riffs and it all sounds very authentic. Catchy and fun. (CK)
(Get Hip)

ULTRABUNNY – "Volume Merchants/Unsafe at Any Age" LP

Two live conceptual pieces from a crew of Northeastern weirdos. Each side is presented as one "suite," divided into several movements... The tunes on the A-side range from white noise over tribal drums to post-rock guitar freakouts and then spacey ambient jams, while the flip is more primitive, noisy, fukkd-sounding, art-damaged punk with drug-induced (or inducing) psychedelic interludes. To be digested only by open-minded punks. (WN)
(self-released)

UNDERDOG – "Matchless" 2xLP

This band fucking ruled. I ought to just end it there because you should know who UNDERDOG was, and I would hope to hell that you have at least heard the EP, simply one of the best late '80s NYHC records ever to come out. When UNDERDOG released a full album a couple of years later, *The Vanishing Point*, many people—myself included—immediately dismissed it as too metal, or worse, an attempt to sell out. But, as some great works do, it eventually grew on



people and within a few years the reputation had completely reversed. It was too late by that point, however, and band was history. Taking cues from the hardcore scene from which they emerged, as well as a heavy nod to BAD BRAINS, *The Vanishing Point* blended power-chord heaviness with clean notes (thanks to the amazing guitar work of MCRAD's Chuck Treece), some reggae and arguably one of the most powerful vocal deliveries, creating something quite distinct. Along with that incredible album, this reissue also has a second record comprised of the 1985 and 1988 demos that were released a while back on *Revelation*. These are killer; the 1985 songs are sessions from the classic EP and the 1988 tracks are raw versions of *Vanishing Point* tracks. The gatefold has some cool photos and lyrics are included, and it's even on blue wax ("True Blue"!). If you already have this stuff there's nothing new here, but for the rest who've been deprived all this time, now's your chance to own this amazing collection. (BG)
(Bridge Nine)

VACCUUM – "Horror's All Over" EP

Fuck, this band rules and I'm not saying that because it features fellow *MRR* dorks. The last few times I've seen VACCUUM they were fantastic and this recording keeps the hits coming. The band plays fast and chaotic hardcore that also registers a bit on the crust-o-meter with lyrics that are frustrated, bleak and filled with rage. The bass is mixed high enough to where its presence shares that same crushing quality as on ARTIMUS PYLE records and when you put Robert Collins on vocals in front of that sound it does remind me of something like a sped up ARTIMUS PYLE with hardcore guitar, which is fukking rad. Gnarly hardcore for the punks. (BL)
(Lengua Armada)

THE WHITE WIRES – "II" LP

Dirty pop punk, harking back to the days when the QUEERS, SCREECHING WEASEL and the VINDICTIVES were actually good. It's got too much of a MARKED MEN production to have it neatly fall into rank with the pop punk brigade. Hints of greased-back hair and high school jackets, done with less innocence and more dirt. Not really ripping up the rulebook of RAMONES-inspired rock, but in this genre, who really cares? (SD)
(Dirtnap)

XBRAINIAX – "Deprogrammed" CD

After a brutal and excellent mid-tempo opening track, Michigan's finest fastcore veterans blast through 30 songs that each clock in around the half-minute mark. Total blurrcore mania here, with jackhammer drums and vocals spewing disdain as fast as the guitars can crank out the riffs (pretty fast, apparently). The slow bits are sporadic but devastating, especially after your brain is turned to slush by the grind. These kids have been active for years, and this release floors their earlier efforts; indeed, it destroys most of the output from similar bands. An obligatory eleven-minute dirge closes the disc and fades into electronic noise...a peaceful but disconcerting end to the most brutal 30 minutes of your day. Completely awesome. (WN)
(To Live a Lie)

YOUNG IDENTITIES – "Positive Thinking" EP

Brisbane may be soaking but remnants of the city live on, if this EP's any indication. YOUNG IDENTITIES were one of the second wave of Australian punk—retard rock with exceptionally nasal vocals. It'd be a crime if I didn't describe this as snotty, though I admit it's a cliché. Not as sterling an example of Australian brilliance as some of their contempos (such as JUST URBAIN or the brilliant BODYSNATCHERS who they shared members with) but worth picking up nonetheless. This appears to be part of a reissue project punk's own Timmy Hefner is undergoing, re-releasing everything on Brisbane's Shake/Savage Records, records such as those by the bands mentioned above, which is a goddamn laudable project and I'm tweakin' my nips just thinking about it. (BB)
(540)

ZAPIAIN – "Jibberjabber" CD

This UK band sounds like early FACE TO FACE with Greg from BAD RELIGION singing. Maybe there's a future as a BAD RELIGION tribute band but this was too generic and flat to get excited about. (RL)
(Bombed Out)

THE ZEROS – "Main Street Brat/Hand Grenade Heart"

All right, when I saw this in the bin, I was hoping for some unreleased tracks and I got all fucking sweaty over it, but was bummed to find it is another reissue of songs some of us know already. These tracks (plus two others) were released on Munster Records over in Spain a while ago. Maybe it is long gone so they decided to issue this single. For those who don't already know, the fucking ZEROS were one of Southern California's first punk bands. All in their sexy Latin punkness this band wrote songs that have looped through my mind for years. Amazing! If you are unfamiliar, this record or any other release will clue you into this bands greatness—check 'em out! (MS)
(Last Laugh)

ZOMBIE SURF CAMP – "Reefbiter" CD

A collection of ghoulish songs about, well... the undead. The singer is a dead-ringer for the ELVIS-esque vocal inflections of Danzig-era MISFITS, and the music (no surprises there) mixes up pre-thrash MISFITS with the more surfy guitar stylings of DEAD KENNEDYS and the gothic-horror dramatics of 45 GRAVE. And y'know, it actually all works really well. A keeper for sure. (RK)
(self-released)

V/A – "Festa de la Pohoda #10" DVD

A DVD of the tenth annual instance of the festival that takes place in the Czech town of Vodňany, this DVD captures the bands in several camera angles in black and white, as well as the large stumbling mess of total mohawked and patched-out punks that stumble and thrash around the front of the stage. It's a great soundboard recording, and the quality of the bands—most of which were unknown to me—is surprisingly largely fantastic, from the weird no wave/CONTORTIONS-ish USTKINI, to the anthemic melodic hardcore of ILEGALITY (killer classic Eastern European hardcore!) and SVINĚ!, the fast snappy hardcore of SOCIÁLNÍ TERROR, the hyper fast Japanese-ish hardcore of SEE YOU IN HELL, to the grind-ish metallic blistering hardcore of GRIDE, DEZINFEKCE (an inventive stripped down three piece hardcore band that sounds vaguely like PERSONALITY CRISIS at points), even HUSA, the indie/alterna-rock band that opens the DVD, is really good for the style of music! Of course there's a couple of, well..."support the scene, it's cool you guys played," but overall most of the groups are strong. The only complaint with this DVD is that the festival's outdoor venue has a long yet not very deep stage, so the bands have limited mobility and the far camera angles falsely make the festival look poorly attended, but the small stage probably allows for better on-stage camera angles of the musicians themselves. A neat and surprising survey of the strength and variety of part of the Czech scene! Recommended! (P.S. Kids, when you go to the show, the dog stays at home!!!!) (KS)
(Papgajuv Hlasatel)

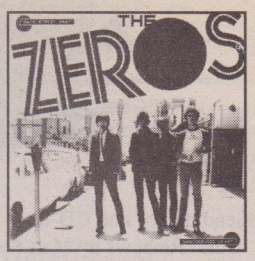
V/A – "War, Terror and Ice Cream" CD

This is a four-band compilation from some far-flung corners of the world. DEFECATION AREA starts off this CD and, even though they are from Germany, they sound like any other stupid pop punk band from the US, such as the NOBODYS. The OLYMPIANS churn out three boring songs that sound exactly what I think living in Upland, CA would feel like. The LIVING REJECTS do nothing to disrupt this bland landscape of half-baked "whoa-oh"-inspired dreck that litters this compilation. The last band, SICK, mixes things up with their metallic hardcore sound and they end up being the best on here. The aggression, screaming, and anger on their three songs are a breath of fresh air when compared to everything else on this CD. Still, it's not great. It's like eating dog turds all day with nothing to wash it down. Then someone offers you a drink and it turns out to be a glass of his or her piss. Drink my piss. (GH)
(Brown Bag Propaganda)

V/A – "We're All in This Together" LP

A comp that features several songs from each band is always a plus in my book, so four tunes by MDC is a good way to build my anticipation for throwing this on. A couple of them I've heard

before,(is a new version of "Dead Cops" necessary?). Still, the MDC tracks are great, including the classic "Timmy Yo," which of course touches a soft spot with us at *MRR*. The rest of the bands on this slab of wax, while lesser known, all carry their weight and contribute a few good tracks apiece. CRACKBOX plays a few mid-tempo tunes with a soulful, raspy voice that reminds me a bit of Ivy from the LOS CANADIANS at times, but the one faster song they do here doesn't hold up as well. TRIPLE X and HANKER HOAX HAPHAZARD are both Indonesian hardcore bands, and together are my favorite of the bunch. They both deliver their own style of fast and clean traditional hardcore, sounding almost like they came from the late-'80s Dutch straightedge scene or something. ASSPISS plays some circle-pit anthems for the belligerent punx, of course. What do you expect with a name like that? While this is no *Let Them Eat Jellybeans*, it's certainly worth a spin or two. (BG)
(Suburban Whitewash)



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ADD: POB 8240, Tampa, FL 33674, addrecs.com

Blastcat: bwastbeat@gmail.com

Bombed Out: www.bombedout.com

Bridge Nine: www.bridge9.com

Brown Bag: www.myspace.com/brownbagprop

Bullshit Propaganda: www.bspropaganda.com

Certified PR: www.certifiedprrecords.com

Custody Battle: myspace.com/custodybattleaz

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Dead Broke: 139 Huber Ave, Holbrook, NY 11741 www.deadbrokerecords.com

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Deranged: www.derangedrecords.com

Dialogue: 2-21-206 Jiyugaoka Mito, Ibaraki, JAPAN

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Dirtnap: 2615 SE Clinton St, Portland, OR 97202, www.dirtnaprecs.com

Disposable Culture: www.dispocult.com

Do Not Resuscitate: deaddeaddeaddeaddead@gmail.com

Do Ya Hear We: www.doyahearwe.com

Dr. Strange: PO Box 1058, Alta Loma, CA 90701, www.rarepunk.com

Eradicator: eradicatorrecords.bigcartel.com

Ernst: www.myspace.com/eatergrums

FDH: 829 W Ritner, Philadelphia, PA 19148, www.fdhmusic.com

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Hard Sell: www.thehardsell.net

Headcount: www.headcountrecords.com

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HoZac: www.hozacrecords.com

IFB: 4447 St. Clair Ave. W., North Ft. Myers, FL 33903, www.ifbrecords.com

Intellect: www.intcollective.com

It's Alive: www.itsaliverecords.com

Konton Crasher: PO Box 393, Lakewood, OH 44107, www.kontoncrasher.blogspot.com

Last Laugh: www.lastlaughrecords.us

Lengua Armada: martincrudo@yahoo.com

Let's Pretend: PO Box 1662 Bloomington, IN 47402, www.letspretendrecords.com

Livid: www.lividrecords.com

Loveload: www.theloveload.com

Margin Walker: marginwalkershows@gmail.com

Mauled by Tigers: 701 Snow St, Chattanooga, TN 37405, www.mauledbytigers.com

Mauski: www.punkinfinland.net/mauski

MCR Company: 157 Kaimiagu, Maizuru, Kyoto 624-0913, JAPAN, dance.ne.jp/~mcr/

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Middle Man: www.myspace.com/middlemanrecordshop

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Mountain Screamer: www.myspace.com/mountainscreamermusic

Narm: www.narmdiscos.com

Necro-Tone: myspace.com/necrotonerecords

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Pirates Press: www.piratespressrecords.com

Plan-It-X South: 720 Pickens Ave, Pensacola, FL 32503

Prank: PO Box 410892, San Francisco CA, 94141-0892, www.prankrecords.com

P. Trash: Peter Eichhorn, Augustastrasse 4, 33649 Bielefeld, GERMANY, www.ptrashrecords.com

Residue: www.residue-records.com

Resurrection: www.myspace.com/resurrectionrecords666

Rockstar: Viktoriastr. 51, 52006 Aachen, GERMANY

Rotten to the Core: www.rtcrecords.com

Safety Meetings: 196 Norton St #2, New Haven, CT 06511, www.safetymeeting.net

Scared to Death: myspace.com/scareddeath

Shock to the System: POB 400206, Cambridge, MA 02140, www.shocktothesystemrecs.com

Sing Sing: www.singsingrecords.com

Sound Pollution: www.soundpollution.se

Static Shock: 13 Bennett Court, London, N7 6BE, UNITED KINGDOM

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Suburban Whitewash: PO Box 270594, Fort Collins, CO 80527-0594, www.suburbanwhitetrashrecords.com

Taang!: 706 Pismo Ct., San Diego, CA 92109, www.taang.com

Teenage Rebel: www.teenage-rebel.de

Terrorotten: www.terrotten.com

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DEMOS

Send demos and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Matt Bleyle, Robert Collins, and, Dan Goetz.

ANIMAL TRAIN – Female fronted stripped down punk...sounds like this was made by older folks (no, I don't mean kids in their 20s, I mean actual adults), but ANIMAL FARM have far more life that just an average bar punk retirement band. Equal parts UK and late '80s Midwest influence... just a CD-R with no art though, would've liked an actual demo. (Robert) (8-song CD-R, no lyrics, punkrockers.com/animaltrain)

ARSONSMITH – When this is good, I love it—crushing modern HC from Philippines with well thought out lyrics and expert delivery. They try to kill it by adding the unappealing parts of modern commercial HC to the mix: melodic backing vox, and breakdowns that invite just the wrong kind of dancing. Fortunately they don't spend too much time flirting with the mainstream, and the good outweighs the bad on this demo. (Robert) (6-song CD-R, lyrics included, myspace.com/arsonsmithph)

BASEMENT ANIMAL – In a scene rammed with bands trying to push this boundary or that, trying to be more original than the next band at the expense of making anything memorable, it's actually refreshing to hear a band stay inside the lines—just as long as they do so perfectly. Within the confines of any genre, the standard bar has already been set, and usually set pretty fukkn high, so if you're going to grind, you had better grind as good as BASEMENT ANIMAL. Stripped down, raw and gnarly punk/grind from WALLS, SOCIETY OF FRIENDS and RIPPER personnel—this kills. (Robert) (11-song CD-R, no lyrics, myspace.com/basementanimal)

BLACK MAMBA BEAT / WAKE UP DEAD split – BMB fill side A with watered down MISFITS worship and mid-tempo pop, I just can't imagine a world that needs "Zombie Love," and "Rich Friends" lacks any thing bordering on enthusiasm, though the guitars do kinda suck me in and I stuck with the whole side. WUD on the flip are more raucous and more rock'n'roll, though tranquilized versions of both. Catchy shit on both sides, I just wish both of them would ramp up the...well, just ramp it up a bit. (Robert) (11-song split cassette, no lyrics, www.kindturkey.com)

THE DEAD PAWNS – Slogging through a half hour of mid-paced out of tune bar punk. Like watered down later GG ALLIN with out any shred of an edge, or a fraction of the hooks in the songs. (Robert) (18-song CD-R, no lyrics, myspace.com/thedeadpawns)

DIPERS – Don't be fooled by the name/mock logo, this band sounds nothing like WIPERS... maybe more like POISON IDEA with lyrics written by WEIRD AL. Reminds me at certain times of poppy east bay punk bands á la S.P.A.M RECORDS like the BLOTTOS or YOUR MOTHER but not as lyrically genius as anything BOBBY JOE EBOLA related. With that being said, the lyrics to "Dog Mosh," about a crust punk's dog who can mosh, made me laugh but that's not saying much cause I still think that *Dumb And Dumber* is funny. Was this song inspired by the band CANINUS? (Matt) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, Eat The Life Records, 4934 N. Winthrop Ave. #BSMT, Chicago 60690)

THE DROUGHTS – Second tape in as many months from these jangling and dreary gentlemen. Like the SMITHS playing downtrodden warbling garage pop, but I mean that as a positive observation. The airy and grim "Under Tractor Wheels" is the winner here. (Robert) (10-song cassette, no lyrics, www.thedroughtsmusic.com)

FLEX YOUR HEAD – Not the DC worship I was expecting, but this is great on an entirely different level. Burly (not macho) east coast SXE HC with subtle (and sick) metal touches. Heavy like a freight train, and complete non-stop attack, the way a hardcore platter should sound. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, www.intcollective.com)

FORCED LAUGH – Angular, clean guitars and an off kilter but determined approach to garage punk make this a winner for me. Accidental or otherwise, this ends up as a tape full of marginally competent and wholly endearing mid-tempo KBD style slabs mixed EDDY CURRENT and early CURE recordings. Great and embarrassingly addictive. (Robert) (8-song cassette, no lyrics, $5 ppd from: 1868 Franklin St., Vancouver, BC V5L 1P8 CANADA)

KICKING SPIT – Anthemic hardcore ripped straight from the heart of the '90s. It kinda grooves like grunge (and has the same guitar crunch), it sways like AVAIL, and there's SUPERCHUNK vocal melodising too. Throw DINOSAUR JR into the mix and there you have it. (Robert) (6-song cassette, no lyrics, www.tankcrimes.com)

KRUEL – A collection of tracks from various demos released for KRUEL's West Coast tour last year, ranging from the ultra rudimentary 2008 *Dis* demo to tracks from their relatively recent four band split LP. Raw and distorted D-beat attack sung in Spanish—for those who want their ramshackle third world punk but don't to leave the USA. A pure and honest assault from a killer band. (Robert) (16-song cassette, no lyrics, dbeatrawponx@yahoo.com)

NATURAL ABUSE – Do I really need to describe this? You know enough to grab a copy of *MRR*, and you are smart enough to flip straight to the demo reviews to see who's new and what's gonna be hot shit tomorrow, but yet you don't know what a band who names their demo *Blistered Eardrums* sounds like? Well welcome to school, punk: NATURAL ABUSE sound like light speed thrashcore distorted to shit with screams of anguish and a "fuck everything let's grind" approach that kicks in after about a fifteen second Japanese hardcore teaser. And the cover was drawn by a twelve year old. Oh wait, you already knew all that...punk rockers are smart. (Robert) (6-song cassette, no lyrics included, myspace.com/nagrindpunk)

NEGATIVE STANDARDS – First time I've heard an Obama sound clip used in a song and I give props for that. This band uses a lot of sound clips. If there were as many good riffs as there are audio clips this would be an amazing demo. Pesky diatribes aside, this band has sick guitar tones and I'm not opposed to using sound clips in songs. I'm not a huge fan of TRAGEDY or FROM ASHES RISE, but if you like those bands than you will be into this. (Matt) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, P.O. Box 22083, Oakland, Ca 94623)

NO CONNECTION – Poppy melodic punk, stripped down and addictive, but with the lyrical content of an anarchist crust record. Female vocals sweetly croon about the horrors of animal testing, discrimination, the destruction of the earth and the like. Great songs, brings to mind THIS IS MY FIST minus the rasp in the vox...I'm sold. (Robert) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, $4 ppd from: 1003 E. Lafayette St., Syracuse, NY 13210)

NOOSE – Meaty Midwest hardcore with liberal use of mid-tempo mosh parts, crew backing vocals and most of the other clichés that make us love this shit. NEGATIVE APPROACH worn proudly on their sleeves, these dudes blaze through with purpose. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, noosexchicago.blogspot.com)

PART TIME CROOKS – From the same family who bring us DEAD PAWNS and DISCO FOR FERNS nearly every month comes (finally) a fast and fun disc. Meat and 'taters light speed hardcore here, not a shred of anything new, but who needs new shit all the time when you're getting hammered with your bros, right? (5-song CD-R, no lyrics, c/o PO Box 465, Pilot Knob, MO 63663)

PLAN BEER – Catchy US styled HC from Hungary. Ripping fast core tracks mixed with old school HC and then some modern anthemic/melodic bits...as a whole release this is a little too

all over the place for me, though each of the styled is fine on it's own. (Robert) (6-song CD-R, no lyrics, *English:* myspace.com/planbeer, *Magyar:* planbeer.blogspot.com)

RAINBOW PERSON – Chaotic and emotive hardcore. Sounds like it was recorded in a huge room with DK styled reverbed guitars doing serious art damage to forceful and withdrawn miscreants. Not something easily digested in one sitting, and far from pleasing to listen to, RAINBOW PERSON refuse to exist as background music and I like that. (Robert) (3-song cassette, lyrics included, $3 ppd from: 3079 Broad St., San Louis Obispo, CA 93401)

RAINBOW PERSON – This band looks and sounds like they want YOUTH ATTACK to put out their LP. I was hoping they might sound more like UNITED MUTATION instead of "weird" emocore but it doesn't. This band has potential though because one of their songs sounds like CHURCH POLICE "The Oven is My Friend" a little bit. For fans of CULT RITUAL and the intro to "My War" but not the rest of the song. (Matt) (2 (or 3?)-song cassette, lyrics included, 3079 Broad St., San Luis Obispo, CA, 93405)

REHASHED – Did you say you were looking for blistering thrash metal with D-beat and crust leanings and just a hint of melody? Did you also mention that you wanted the vocals to be spit with military precision, as if NYHC had gone all ENTOMBED? Well, if you were looking for all of that, plus a face melting shred-a-thon in the solo department, and you were only interested if is comes from the desolate plains of central Canada, then REHASHED is the band to satisfy your longings. I cannot imagine this style being played better than this. (Robert) (12-song CD-R, lyrics included, www.myspace.com/rehashedthrash)

ROTOZAZA – 2006 recording from these Arizona noise punk behemoths. Not a discernible riff to be found anywhere on this attack, just blown to shit guitars and 1000mph fastcore shoved into a CONFUSE meatgrinder. (Robert) (14-song cassette, lyrics included, myspace.com/rotozaza)

SHALLOW BREATH – Uncompromising political hardcore with a disjointed delivery that comes off like lost EARTH CRISIS demos. Hate cops, love animals, love low-end chugs and dog piling sing-a-longs. While musically this is a throwback to a decade and half ago, it takes tough guy hardcore to it's pre commercial roots and reintroduces the politics that made it appealing in the first place. Tons of info with this release as well, and yes, vivisection *is* still fraud, thanks dudes. (Robert) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, myspace.com/shallowbreath)

SLEEP WALK – Heavy and slick Southern California hardcore: bulldozing fast riffs and expert use of the mosh part (I'm talking about circle pit inducing mid-tempo breakdowns, not the nonsense Low E chugs). This reminds me of early '00s SoCal starting to mess with rock'n'roll in just the right way. Also, accidental or otherwise, they nailed LIFES HALT's guitar tone. (Robert) (6-song cassette, no lyrics, myspace.com/sexfiend911)

SPINES – This is a punk band with an autoharp and it's not a gimmick, no shit. I guess it makes sense, since an autoharp is still a stringed instrument, and these songs would be played the same way if they were being played with a guitar, but it gives these dorky, irreverent songs a more moody feeling. The lyrics fit the music perfectly, addressing pressing topics such as the feds taking ones meds, being stuck in a prison of glue, and the transmission man, that would make the dorky teenager in all of us proud. (Dan) (4-song CD-R, lyrics included, c/o Tony Arena, PO Box 1502, Old Chelsea Station, New York, NY 10113, myspace.com/spinesnyc

STOCKPILE – Solid crusty hardcore out of Philly that generally keeps a fast, steady pace, with the occasional siren guitar solo or (more common) breakdown thrown in, while the vocalist tries his damndest to keep the glass in his throat from descending any further down. The drumming is precise, and knows exactly when to focus on the ride or the floor tom or whatever to keep the songs moving along. Makes for a satisfying musical meal. (Dan) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, stockpilepunks@gmail.com)

TELECOMMANDE – were nice enough to repress their 2009 *3615* demo with their 2008 demo on the flipside for those of us who missed out the first time. Just listening to this makes me feel like a swarthy and intellectually superior film noir expert drinking red wine and eating a baguette—do you know what that shit sounds like? It sounds fukkn great, that's how it sounds. It sounds like a drum machine blasting out the most infectious beats known to man (or machine) and blown out four track versions of the finest power pop/dance punk raising your fat ass off your seat and onto the dance floor. Yeah, screw that drink you just bough and forget that girl you were gonna try to screw (she wasn't interested anyway) and fukkn *DANCE MOTHERFUCKER!!!!* You thought the SPITS were the best French party band ever? You were wrong. (Robert) (13-song cassette, no lyrics, 6128frustration.blogspot.com)

TV FREAKS – Super feisty garage punk from Toronto. The ultra blown out delivery ups the intensity a notch, and makes even the super catchy mid-tempo tunes sound urgent and in your face...think REATARD hooks with a TYRADES approach. Good shit. (Robert) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, lastlaughtapes.blogspot.com)

WAS BLEIBT ÜBRIG? – It's arty and weird, kinda like '90s San Diego with meandering guitar lines and hoarse shouting from the singer. Just when I have a hard time finding the groove, they blast into a few seconds of total HC, but then it's back to disjointed and spastic. I think I like it... though I'm still not quite sure. Score for being far from ordinary. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, c/o 2801 NW 21st St., Oklahoma City, OK 73107)

WEAK LINK – This isn't bad, but the "two step" breakdowns in every song are ruining it for me. I can just picture wholesome 19-year-olds with half-bangs and $25 band hoodies they purchased last week doing the "low skank," and it's sort of gross. Ignoring that, however, this demo is pissed, varied, and rough enough around the edges for me to hang, and despite taking certain youth crew cues, there's no bro factor here. (Dan) (9-song cassette, no lyrics included, myspace.com/weaklink709)

WOMEN IN PRISON – It's as if a gang of garage rockers in Texas somehow co-opted CIRCLE JERKS riffs and turned them into the most addictive collection of burners I've heard in ages. Remember when FUCKED UP was good? Well this tape is what it might have sounded like if FUCKED UP had been great. No need to change a thing, this kills, get one. (Robert) (5-song cassette, no lyrics, trekbgh@yahoo.com)

WOMPERS – Bubblegum powerpop that brought to mind REZILLOS even before I heard their REZILLOS cover. More hooks than a Sunday afternoon fishing show on public access, every song here is destined to pop into your head for weeks on end. (Robert) (13-song cassette, no lyrics, $2 ppd from: 1142 Illini Dr., O'Fallon, IL 62269)

VEX – Political grindcore with a blinding dual vocal assault from Philippines that will leave you in a heap. This is exhausting to listen to. Awesome. (Robert) (14-song CD-R, no lyrics, www.myspace.com/vexgrind)

ZEROZERO – The first song on here is fairly standard mid-paced hardcore, but the rest of the demo is wild, energetic, fast hardcore/punk with melodies and quirkiness that brings to mind maybe the YOUNG WASTENERS meets later GORILLA ANGREB, with a party rock edge to it, though all the songs are a bit different from each other. This was obviously recorded in the red, and there's some fluctuation of the volume, which adds to the raw power. (Dan) (6-song CD-R, lyrics included, zerozeromail@gmail.com, myspace.com/zerozerospace)

V/A "Aklas Laban Sa G8" – Fifteen band (mostly) hardcore comp from Philippines (plus one band from Japan and onefrom Australia). A few standouts here, and there are electro and DIY hip-hop bands to keep you from getting bored with 70 plus minutes of blazing lo-fi crust. MERTA, VEX, OBLIVION INTERFACE 2.0, PARACONFLICT, and EXPLONTOI are the highlights. This appears to be an anti-G8 disc, but comes with no information, political or otherwise. (Robert) (30-song CD-R, no lyrics, no contact info)

V/A "Takefour Collective" – This CD-R collects seventeen songs from this Filipino label's ten-year history, including a label history and brief write-up of each release, with everything put together nicely. The bands on here generally fall under the banner of late '80s and '90s straightedge hardcore (I do not recognize "posi-core" as a legitimate musical description, but it would fit if I did), including some more metallic stuff like CATHARSIS maybe (I'm not an expert on his stuff), and the vast majority of them are quite good. (Dan) (17-song CD-R, no lyrics included, getintouchxxx@yahoo.com, myspace.com/takefourcollective)

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ZINES

Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.

Reviews by:
(MB) Mariam Bastani
(JB) Julia Booze
(TB) Tim Brooks
(EC) E.Conner
(DG) Dan Goetz
(DJ) Danielle Gresham
(LG) Layla Gibbon
(BG) Bob Goldie
(JH) Jenn Hartman
(BL) Brad Lambert
(MM) Marissa Magic
(JM) Jeff Mason
(CR) Casey Ress
(FS) Fred Schrunk
(DS) Dionne Stevens
(AT) Amelia Tith
(VX) XYosefX

ACCEPT THE DARKNESS #4 / $3 US, $5 world, trades welcome
8.5 x 11 – copied – 28 pgs
With her fourth full issue, Shiva has made the big jump, and *Accept the Darkness* has gone from being a half-size to a full-size zine. This might not seem like a big deal, but it is, as it really gives her layouts a chance to shine. I'm a sucker for a good cut-and-paste layout, especially when it's profusely illustrated with stolen photos and awesomely amateurish punk rawk illustrations! As with previous issues, this looks great, and punk as fukk. The issue opens with some thoughts on zine-making, reading, currently inspirational music, and some general ideas on what makes good bands *good*. Following the intro are some decently in-depth (four or five pages each) with Alex from *Ratcharge* zine, Rayos X, and Ratas del Vaticano, followed by eight pages of music and zine reviews. This probably sounds like your pretty standard hardcore/punk zine content, but it was all interesting enough to make me sit down and read this issue from cover to cover. Can't wait for the next issue! (VX)
Shiva/ATD / 61 The Terrace / Katonah, NY 10536
eggmangel@gmail.com

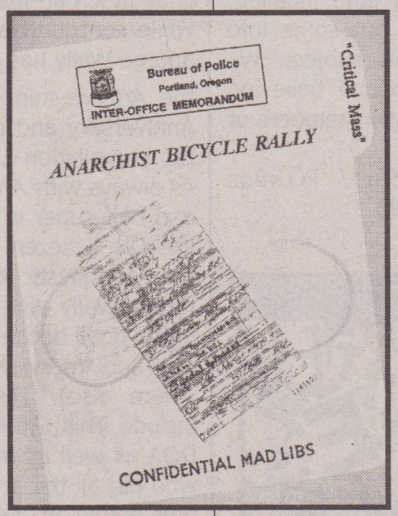
ANARCHIST BICYCLE RALLY / $4
5.5 x 7 – printed – 64 pgs
This is a zine about police surveillance of and intervention in Portland's Critical Mass, written by Joe Biel of Microcosm Publishing. Which is fine. It's in the form of MadLibs, which I guess makes reading fifteen-year-old police documents slightly less dry. In other news, Biel was accused of emotional abuse by his former partner and ongoing accountability processes have been detailed by Cindy Crabb (of Doris zine) on her blog. If you care about community and listening and healing, please consider checking out some info and resources around this subject. We need to start listening to and believing folks who have been hurt by members of our communities. (JH)
www.cantankeroustitles.com / PO Box 14323 / Portland, OR 97293

ARTCORE #27 / contact for price
8 x 11 – printed – 36 pgs
I started reading *Artcore* around 1987 or so, about a year or two after I first discovered *MRR*. Around that time I soaked up every two bit punk zine put out (and there were many), and *Artcore* was far and away one of the best. 20 something years later and how many of those zines still exists? None, other than the one you hold in your hand. Welly has soldiered on through the terrible '90s, the age of the internet, emo, grunge and rave. This zine is as much an institution as this rag, and while contributors and shitworkers come and go Welly has remained at the helm of the *Artcore*-ship. This issue is the 25th! Anniversary and comes with the ABC No Rio compilation LP reviewed last month. As always with *Artcore* it's half new bands and half super in depth articles of bands like Die Kruezen, Saints, Dickies, Poison Idea and Mystic Records (hopefully in the future Welly will compile these histories into a book because much of the information and interviews are unavailable anywhere else). The new bands covered include This System Kills, Southport and DOA as well as an interview with Squeal who did all the art for Icons of Filth. The type is tiny as always so there is a ton to read. What makes *Artcore* stand out from most zines today is that Welly has an editorial voice, he has never shied from giving his opinion...which is what makes a publication like this so vital. No arse kissing, so backslapping, he tells it like it is. I truly believe this to be one of the premier zines in out subculture. I hope that we will all be lucky enough to have another 25 years!!! (TB)
c/o 1 Aberdulais Road / Gabalfa, Cardiff / CF14 2PH, Wales / UK

THE BACKYARD FLAMES (ALMOST 4 YEARS) / $?
8 x 5.5 – copied – 20 pgs
This zine chronicles the four-year existence of the band the Backyard Flames, from London, England. They are self-described as a punk/indie rock/alternative/ jazz mash-up. Starting from their first gig in April of 2006 they lead you through their time capsule of gigs up until

2009. From the blurbs written, they appear to be a solid bunch of friends/comrades, touring and playing music and having fun doing it. Which in the end, sounds like a good life to me. (DJ)
myspace.com/thebackyardflamesmusic

BEAT MOTEL #10 / $4 US and Australia, 2 UK, 2.5 Euros
8.x 6 – printed – 60 pgs
This zine comes to us from Ipswich, England, it has a similar format as the zine you read at this moment. There are tons of columns with this month's theme being "success." There are interviews with indie horror film maker Colin Burrowes about his new splatter film *Gopher Wood*, bands Bastila, Brux, the Thermals, and Sons of Alpha Centauri, a tour diary from Mum Locked in Castle, an excerpt about the evils of Facebook from a novel called *Getting It*, an advice column, loads of zine reviews, music reviews, show reviews, (my favorite) an article on fart facts and more. The layout is one that makes you want to look through the zine several times so you can absorb all the little graphics and text that are going. There are some funny moments here and some decent writing at times, but it's full of inside jokes that tend to be awesome for those who are involved, but kill the interest of readers outside of it. From what I can gather, the Ipswich punk scene is bro heavy...too bad there aren't more ladies involved. There seem to be some fairly motivated and creative people involved with many projects going on besides this one. This is a cool window into what is going on in Ipswich and I would be stoked to have all this zine and record info if I lived in this town. (MB)
www.beatmotel.co.uk / PO Box 773 / Ipswich IP1 9FT / UK /
arse@beatmotel.co.uk



BLUE OKOYE #1 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 20 pgs
This was all right. The graphics make it kind of look like some anime thing, but inside it's all just writing about different things. It almost seems like it's different parts to a single narrative, but it's really stilted so I can't tell. Either way the writing is really good, all just kind of thoughts on everyday life bullshit. Good writing, weird format. Enjoyable. (MM)
Uzodinma Okehi / 34-25 Fulton St. #1 / Brooklyn, NY 11208

THE BOOK BINDERY / $5
4.5 x 6 – printed – 96 pgs
This is a short book by Sarah Royal about her experiences working in a bookbindery in Chicago and it's pretty damn funny. Royal's story telling style is easy to read and entertaining as she describes the shared monotony of working in an industrial job with a bunch of other misfits. For a moment I was put of by Royal's admission that she was taking this job right out of college with the intent of some day moving on to some "real" job. I found it a little insulting for those whose industrial job *is* their "real" job. Well, I sigh with relief that this is not some bullshit perzine about "slumming it" with the "people" by working a factory job out of some lily white college. Thank you. I was happy to realize that Royal seems aware of this and her place in the bookbindery. She describes situations and captures the eccentricity of the people around her with out sounding condescending or assigning judgment any more that others assign to her. The shit talking and irony in the place seems to be shared by all because they are, for better or for worse, in it together. Ahhh, I miss Chicago... Anyway, this is a funny, light on the heavy themes read. As described in the introduction, it really does make you want to bring this type of humor to a shitty job. A good read. (MB)
www.lastgasp.com /
Microcosm Publishing / 222 S. Rogers St. Bloomington, IN, 47404

DEATH PANEL #3 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 26 pgs
This reads like an angsty offshoot of a community college literary journal. The first submission describes the writer physically removing his brain as an alternative to substance abuse (someone tell DARE), the second is a lengthy exercise in description that could've been copped from a creative writing assignment, the third deconstructs the supposed advertising claim that human hair is fortified, another submitter still finds hipster stereotypes funny, and so forth. Strictly for chain-smoking coffeeshop dwellers. (DG)
364 51st St. #24 / Brooklyn, NY 11211

GREAT ANARCHISTS / 2.50 Euros
8.5 x 11 – printed – 20 pgs
This zine features 20 cameos of individuals throughout history who "both in theory and in practice" contributed to the anarchist movement. While putting hand-drawn face to anti-statists' quote, the illustrator/compiler Peter Willis recognizes the contradiction that by calling these featured folks "great" he goes against anarchy's opposition to hierarchies. Just as any human is capable of corruption, no anarchist is incapable of being sexist or racist—Willis also notes of Pakunin and Proudon featured there within. It kinda reminds me of a US presidents' children's book, but the opposite and drawn with weirdo's hand. These pages allow the reader to appreciate the contributions of those featured, without discrimination, and encourage folks to think about what it means to be ones own self-governing body. I would even recommend it as an introductory learning tool if you are an educator or want to encourage younger generations of skeptical youth! Peter Willis probably wasn't thinking that when he made it, but could you imagine an "anarchy/anti-state" shelf in the children's book section? How cool would that be! Some pages and more of the author's rad work featured at his website. (AT)
www.deadtreesanddye.com / 11 Glebe Way / Histon Cambridge CB49HJ / UK

LAST BREATH #7 / $4
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 46 pgs – Serbian/English
A mixed Serbian/English language zine that follows the standard columns, scene report, interviews, photos, reviews, formula, with a no-frills, pro layout. The columns and reviews are in Serbian, while the interviews, Israel scene report, and Works tour diary are in English. Interviewed herein are Wasted Time, Guitar Gangsters, Double Negative, Havoc Records, the Prowlers, Mother Pig, etc..., and are hit or miss, probably depending on which of the contributors did the given interview. Whether you'd be into this zine probably depends on whether you like the interviewed bands enough to want to learn more about them, or if you live in

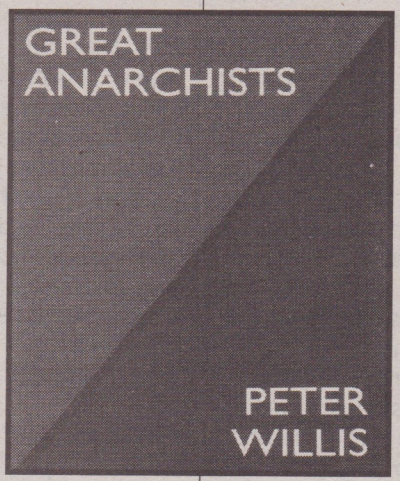
Serbia and are stoked that there's a zine in your native language. (DG)
In the US: www.sorrystaterecords.com or www.gravemistakerecords.com/catalog / c/o Boskovic Neuana / V. Vlahovic D3 1/7 / 19300 Negotin / Serbia
myspace.com/lastbreathzine

LOSERDOM #21 / no price listed
5.75 x 8.25 – copied – 80 pgs
Dublin's greatest bike punk zine returns in fat and fine form with this installment dominated by comics and interviews. As ever, tales of cross-country biking appear, yet even as comics I still find these a little dry. Also there's a tale of time-travelling punks and a WW3-esque comic about the recession. The interviews are a bit out of the ordinary. First there's a series of talks with first-generation Dalkey punks, Dalkey being a rich neighborhood now but not so much then. The time the castle collapsed and killed someone is recounted. Also an older lady who has busked (played music in the street for money) for many years is asked about her experiences. Some reviews and a little bit of local style round it out. If you've enjoyed this before, it's the same but bigger and better now. I'm not the hugest fan, more a sympathizer. Contact them for pricing and a postal address. (JM)
www.loserdomzine.com

MISHAP "CATALOG OF HAPPY FUN" #30/ trade, ftp, $1.50
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 24 pgs
This is like the punk mad magazine or something. It's frustrating to read things that are printed in so many different fonts. I fucking hate Curlz MT. Besides that I can appreciate how even handed this guy is. He pokes fun at everyone. That doesn't mean it's all funny. A "GAG CATALOG" is found here. Staplers with LSD in them, bumper sticker reviews, parodies of a zine catalog. The orange cover is ugly but maybe that's supposed to be funny too. (EC)
PO Box 5841 / Eugene, OR 97405

MONGREL ZINE #9 / $?
8.5 x 7 – copied – 108 pgs
Never run into this Canadian rag before, it is packed with cool material! Comic interview centerfold with the band Nü Sensae is, and I do not fuck around with this word, *perfect*. "Why don't you play all ages shows? —Cuz I'm not allowed to be around kids—" Some really far out shit in here, I had a great time thumbing through the oddities. There's a predictable amount of reviews and ads and stuff, but then there is an interview with "white witch" MC/improvisational jazz guitarist/hippie maven Giselle Numba One, who lives off the land out in the Quebec sticks. Plus an interview with Kier-la Janisse, founder of the Criminal Cinema festival in Vancouver, all around horror film fanatic and badass. So much cool shit...Ty Segall, Hell Shovel, Ben Lyon, Topless Mongos, and so on...can't find a price but it's totally worth it! Comes with a CD comp too. (JB)
mongrelzine@gmail.com

THE NEGATIVE GUEST LIST #17
8.5 x 11 – copied – 30 pgs
This Australian zine is crammed full of material by a few different writers. Included with the zine is a CD-R comp with a bunch of bands that I had never heard of, even though one of them is apparently from Oakland. They probably live down the street from me. I was stoked to see that the main zine dude wrote book reviews about *We Never Learn* by the dude who sang for the New Bomb Turks and Hunter Thompson's *Kingdom of Fear*—two books I've been meaning to read. There are lots of record reviews and interviews sent in by contributors, mostly with Australian bands but with a few from the States and around the world. Bands include Bassholes, Bum Creek, Southern Comfort, Estrogen Highs and many others. (BL)
Brendon Annesley, 62 Washington Ave, Tingalpa, Brisband, QLD, 4173 / Australia /dirtyalley@msn.com



THE NEGATIVE GUEST LIST #18
8.5 x 11 – copied – 30 pgs
I don't know if this is a real interview but in the last few pages of this Australian zine is a short exchange with Bruce Springsteen. As one of the first questions the interviewer asks him about the TV show *Jersey Shore* and if he thinks that he has any influence on guido culture by merit of being a New Jersey icon. The entire interview lasted about a minute and a half. This is the kind of hilarious shit I read punk zines for. There are a lot of interviews with American bands like Dimples and Woman as well as a retrospective piece about Seattle's Tractor Sex Fatality, written by a member of the band. I enjoyed the smart editorial content at the beginning of the zine especially the rant about the mainstream press' pitiful handling of rock'n'roll and how if you love the music you can either torpedo all hopes of a writing career and stick to your underground guns or join the limpid mainstream. As a fellow impoverished brother in newsprint, I raise my glass. (BL)
Brendon Annesle / 62 Washington Ave / Tingalpa, Brisband, QLD, 4173 / Australia / dirtyalley@msn.com

NINE GALLONS #2 / $4
7 x 7 – printed – 36 pgs
Nine Gallons is a comic focused on the challenges of Food Not Bombs and the relationships between privilege and activism. Neatly illustrated by Susie Cagle, the stories are familiar to anyone who has participated in either FNB specifically or in any activist autonomous workgroup with all its intrinsic challenges. In the late '90s I did one of the cookhouses here for awhile and the frustrations that the author outlines in her zine are both familiar and disappointing: lack of participation, a pernicious influence of privileged white kids and an incredible inability to have anything resembling organization. I'm not sure if I find comfort that Food Not Bombs still manages to do servings here in The City every day or disappointment at its shortcomings, but the inside peek delivered by Susie manages to capture the essence of the experience in a short readable comic. (CR)
Microcosm Publishing / 122 S. Rogers Street / Bloomington, IN 47404
susiecagle@gmail.com

NODE PAJOMO: AN ALTERNATE MEANS OF CONVEYANCE #6 FALL/WINTER 2010 / $1, $2 everywhere else
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 24 pgs
Mail Art is an aging phenomenon in which its form varies depending on the kook who is putting it out. In this issue, you can get a contact and submit your own

illustration of one of the seven wonders or send your face to a faceless mailroom. The format is a little tricky to understand what some of the projects ask for, others have no medium listed, but the editor encourages you to "let your freak flag fly." In the e-world, we are stuck in a non-tactile dimension. Let's face it, <3<3<3 will never be the same as an IRL hug. I admit that I stopped hand-writing friends and crushes because it does take a lot of real human <3 and I'm not the deer-eyed romantic I once was, but I still get excited when I receive anything in the mail that isn't a reminder to pay off my student loans. The first pen pal I ever had was a neighbor of my cousins in Houston when I was eight who was close to my age. I loved getting envelopes, bulky with quarter-machine plastic rings and holographic pogs from an anonymous person. We met years later when we were teens at a mall in Houston. I was really disappointed that he lacked personality and style and was in a gross state of puberty. What's cool about mail art is that it's not necessarily about gut-wrenching confessions and sentimentality, but putting yourself out into the world via the postal system, no strings attached. Node Pajomo has people all over in on it, from Poland, Japan, to Argentina and even some elementary schools that all have their own themed projects. Also listed are projects you can collaborate on, distros, tape and zines trades. In honor of keeping it postal, I'm only gonna give you their mailbox address. You can probably guess their email. (AT)
PO Box 2632 / Bellingham, WA 98227-2632

PROOF I EXIST #13 / $?
5 x 8 – copied – 36 pgs
I believe there is a good chance that all 113 copies of this are sold out by the time this hits the press, but it's worth reviewing if only to encourage readers to write to Billy to find out what's next. I seem to review a publication of his every month and this time I've hit the mother lode. *Proof I Exist* is a zine that resides in the "personal" category of zines, which more often than not give me the shivvers. As I've said before, I couldn't give a fuck about your train-hopping, vegan potluck stories. Billy, on the other hand is really great writer. In each of his stories (about himself...his life) I give a fuck. I don't know the guy, but he weaves a great tale. This particular installment is a labor of love. 113 copies, all with hand stitched covers, each copy having its own cover, as well as its own story (113 different ones) assorted other goodies like pictures (each has its own), stickers, etc...,as well as the usual *Proof I Exist* fare. Damn son!! If you like zines I would suggest tracking down this guys stuff...inspirational! (TB)
c/o Billy / 318C Frost Road / Sandia Park, NM 87047

PUKKA JOINT MASSIF / $?
5 x 4 – copied – 14 pgs
This little zine is all about "reviewing review zines". Confusing, no? Fifty-word mini reviews of about twenty various zines from all over the world. Very DIY cut and paste style and the writing is witty and concise. If anything you should pick this up for the kooky collage backgrounds from classic movies. The editors of the zine also leave you with this bit of wisdom, as will I: "Buy zines, not lattes." (DJ)
Node Pajomo / P.O. Box 2632 / Bellingham, WA 98227

RAD DAD #18/ $3
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 40 pgs
I've always been mystified by those of us involved in this sub-culture that has the phrase "Fuck you DAD!" so imbedded in it's culture but still have the audacity to make a baby. At best it seems foolish and worst just plain arrogant. All my anti-breeder rhetoric aside, this shit gives me hope. This issue focuses on the troubling subjects of sex and love. There are birds and bees getting freaky on the cover, I like that. I do so enjoy the ethic of sharing experiences rather than dispensing advice as well. It's also compelling to see and up to date publication that doesn't shun technology and yet brings this antiquated print communication back to being relevant. So while my womb will remain barren for all time and I will never identify with a single thing written in this magazine, I guess childbearing isn't for dick-heads exclusively. (EC)
raddadzine.blogspot.com / Microcosm / 222 S. Rogers St / Bloomington, IN 47404 / Tomas Moniz / 1636 Fairview St / Berkeley, CA 94703 / tomas.moniz@gmail.com

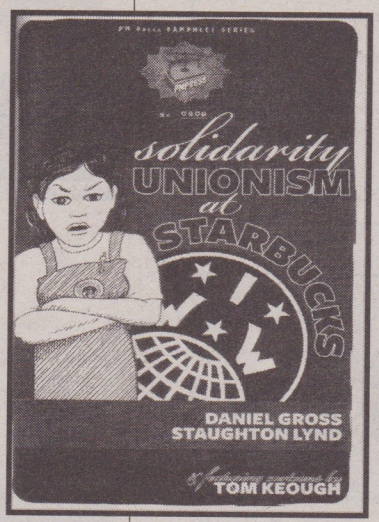
RADIATION SICKNESS #5 / $3.50 US, $4.50 Canada and Mexico, $6 world
8.5 x 11 – printed – 24 pgs
At first look this isn't too far away from Portland's Warning, which means Discharge is a major influence—as they were for the long-gone German band Vorkriegsphase, whose guitarist is interviewed about how things were back then. On the fresh tip are Pdx's Vivid Sekt and Melboune, Autralia's Leprosy. All the interviews, done via email, are fairly extensive and well done. Some demos and zines are reviewed, along with hell of low budget horror films, featuring the work of director G.H. Lewis (Blood Feast, et al.) and the thespian talents of bodybuilding rocker Thor. Eighties metal is also discussed, with a back cover collage of a recently deceased vocalist and some writing of the early recordings of an infamous LA band. A review of a titanic thrash show of this era, written by the guy from Repulsion, is reprinted. There are plenty of art and photos along the way. Overall the whole thing looks and reads great. This zine is recommended. (JM)
Jim Finlaysopn / 704 N Baldwin / Portland, OR 97217 / jfin1984@gmail.com

SIX LETTERS TO YOU #1 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 42 pgs
This zine is really lovely and articulate. It's a collection of letters to no one in particular from no one in particular. It quotes books a lot, mainly classic literature. An explanation of communism, a discussion of working with troubled youth, thoughts on religion. It's really elegant and beautifully written. Beyond the stellar writing another aspect of this zine is the handwriting. It's kind of shitty. It kind of looks like mine. Highly recommended. (MM)
Patrokolos / PO Box 522006 / Salt Lake City, UT 84125

SOLIDARITY UNIONISM AT STARBUCKS #9 / $5
8.5 x 5.25 – printed – 36 pgs
This isn't a zine, really, but rather the ninth edition in a series of informative and compelling pamphlets produced by PM Press that are reminiscent in principle and function that pamphlets played during the revolutionary fervor of the Enlightenment period. Inexpensive and concisely

penned, political pamphlets were (and now are again) a way to spread important political and social information to the people. This edition focuses on the inspirational creation of a Starbucks worker's union, remarkably independent of organized labor assistance. This is most encouraging in an era of defeatist sentiment amongst the wageworker, particularly in the oppressive retail and food industries (and isn't that what the American worker become, a service employee?). Like the other pamphlets in the series, *Solidarity Unionism at Starbucks* is authored by knowledgeable players; the writing here is work of two contributors—Daniel Gross, one of the key Starbucks organizers, and labor historian and legal advocate Staughton Lynd. Tom Keough renders this pamphlet even more interesting with illuminating cartoon work. The statistics of retail labor relations will anger you, but the story of the Starbucks organization will encourage you (though it has far to go). Get this. Get the whole series. (BG)
www.pmpress.org / PM Press / PO Box 23912 / Oakland, CA 94623

SPIT ON THE MAJOR #20 / $?
5.83 x 8.27 (A5) – copied – 24 pgs
This is the twentieth issue of this zine, but the first in English. The editor, Teodoro, recently moved to the UK and "want[s] to spread the anarchist and raw hardcore punk from Spain in this cold country." An admirable goal indeed! The first thing that struck me about this was that the entire thing is handwritten, yet 100% readable. As someone with incredibly shitty handwriting, I'm unduly impressed by this sort of thing. More important than handwriting, though, is content. That's what I assume most of you are interested in. There are no interviews here, but there is a lot of writing about bands. Half of this issue seems to be a sort of primer for introducing English-speaking folks to some killer '80s Spanish and Basque raw hardcore/punk, with biographies/articles on Desauciados, Potas, Autodefensa, Discordia, Danba, and Ximorra. I wasn't really familiar with any of those bands before, other than Discordia, so this was a welcome history lesson. The other half of the zine is taken up with anarchist and punk comix. Unlike a lot of comix in that vein, though, these aren't pedantic or message-obsessed; they're actually funny and quite charming. This zine is a great read—hopefully we'll be seeing another issue soon! (VX)
Teodoro Hernandez / 17 Rochester St. / Brighton / BN2 0EJ / UK



A START AT LEAST #2 / $?
8.5 x 11 – printed – 56 pgs
This fanzine is totally amazing. The layout is kind of weak, but the content is awesome. They mostly stick to interviews, featuring: Doom, Oi Polloi, Active Minds (yes, this zine came out this year), Dios Hastio, Primordial Sounds, Chaka and lots more. There are also a few articles talking about shit like the political and environmental situation in Peru and a band history of Seeing Red—and lots more kick ass stuff. International punk and crust fans need to check this out. Real good. (FS)
Mathieu Braekeveld / Stokerijstraat 40 9000 / Gent / Belgium

THAT'S COOL, THAT'S TRASH! #2 / $3
5.5 x 4.25 – printed – 64 pgs
This is a really cool music fanzine. It's laid out in the classic style of columns, interviews, music reviews, but most of the contents focus is on the interviews. They're pretty extensive and interesting to read. Included in this issue are Marked Men, Mean Jeans, and Johnny Stingray of the Controllers. There's also a comic and a pin-up centerfold (tasteful of course). It definitely focuses on the garage side of punk, but I can imagine it will branch out as more people get involved in this zine, and more people send in their music and zines for review—which you should do. (FS)
PO Box 1941 / Ketchum, ID 83340

TOINEN VAIHTOEHTO #230 / $?
5 x 8 – printed – 36 pgs – Finnish
It says #230? Can't be right. It's all Finnish so that could be how they say two for all I know. Great looking zine. This issue has Fucked Up, Kriegshog, Steve Ignorant, and more as well as the usual reviews. Tiny type so you get a lot of bang for your buck. You also have to speak Finnish...which I don't, so it could be a load of tripe. Looks good though! (TB)
PL 1, 65200 / Vaasa, Finland / tv@punkinfinland.net

TRUST #145/06 / ? 2.50
8.5 x 11.5 – printed – 64 pgs – German
The consistently outstanding *Trust* emerges with another issue packed full of exceptional reviews, photos, interviews, columns, and random articles. Among the more appealing items here is a sneak preview of a book *Network of Friends*, which is a documentary history of the European hardcore and punk scene of the 1980s. This looks like it's going to be amazing and I can't wait to check it out. Another cool article focuses on the dissonance of indie punk distribution and the reality of making money. Several individuals involved with distribution, ranging from Cargo Europe to Rough Trade, weigh in with their opinions. Amid the bands interviewed, such as Schmand, Smoke Blow, and Nihil Baxter, the one that really jumped out at me was Faust, the legendary Krautrock gods of experimental immensity. Very cool to see this legendary group featured in a punk magazine, because their contribution to the roots and aesthetic is unquestioned. Essential reading for any punk who speaks German. (BG)
www.trust-zine.de / Postfach 11 07 62 / 28087 Bremen / Germany

UNDONE #1
8.5 x 11 – copied – 24 pgs
This scissors and glue sticks style zine celebrates Australia's punk rock'n'roll scene. There are interviews with a bunch of active bands that an Australian or someone really into Aussie music might be familiar with but I drew a blank on all of them—only one had been to the US and I have enough trouble trying to keep local bands all straight in my head. Bands include the Danger Men, Dead Farmers, Midnight Woolf, and Lobster Prophet. There was also a short piece with a lot of photos on the history of the Melbourne SHARPs, an ad for kits to beat drug tests, and some pictures of naked ladies out of a porn mag's singles listing. Lot's of show posters and collage art, not always the most tasteful but very punk. And there's a picture of a woman with three boobs. (BL)
undonezine@hotmail.com

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AMSTERDAMNED - EP

9 song EP of the 80's HC/Punk band from Holland. Including songs of the dutch "Als Je Haar Maar Goed Zit" compilations and three unreleased songs: two demo songs and one live recording. Limited clear vinyl availble.

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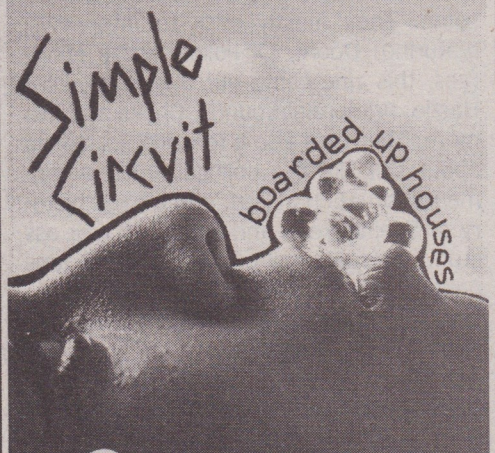

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SWT#003 NIHILIST CUNT- YOU'RE NEXT... 7"- FEMALE FRONTED, CALI HARDCORE PUNK FAST LOUD AND ANGRY THINK NAUSEA AND AUS ROTTEN!

SWT#004 ANAL WARHEAD -"TIME TO DIE 7" - HARDCORE PUNK NOISE SCRAPED OFF THE CRUST OF NEW YORK GUTTERS!

SWT#005 TO BE HATED- BANNED IN DADE COUNTY -7" - LIVE RECORDINGS FROM MIAMI'S STREET PUNK ROCK-N-ROLL THAT WOULD MAKE RANCID CRY FOR SELLING OUT!

fuckoff!

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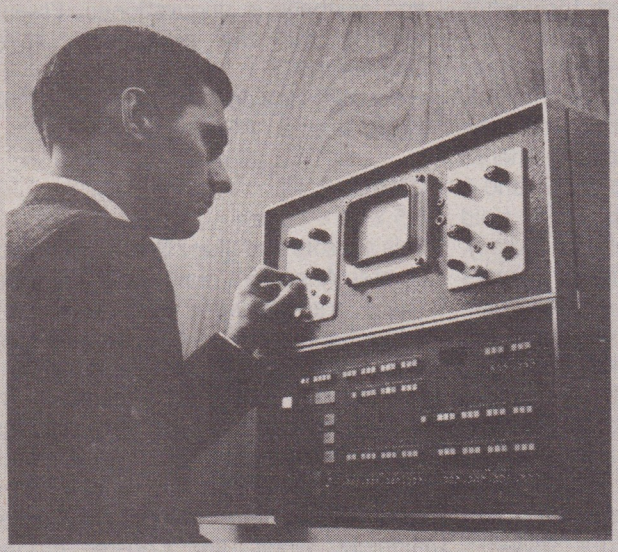
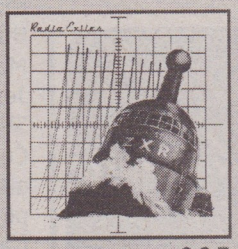
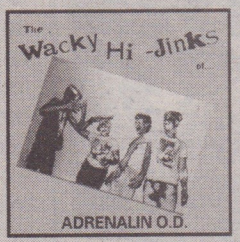




PSYCH-005



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